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BY

Inspector Moser

VOL: 1:

JUNE. 1890.

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TRUE DETECTIVE STORIES

BY

MAURICE MOSER

LATE INSPECTOR OF THE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT,
GREAT SCOTLAND YARD

AND CHRONICLED BY

CHARLES F. RIDEAL

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Dedication.

To

HENRY LABOUCHERE, Esq., M.P.

Sir

You have on many occasions taken a considerable personal interest in various matters (not even overlooking those which might appear at first sight to be of minor importance) requiring reform.

In respectfully dedicating this little work to you I feel that I shall not have written in vain if it should be the means of drawing your attention to the Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland Yard, the system and administration of which would be none the worse for a little looking into.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

MAURICE MOSER.

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TRUE DETECTIVE STORIES.

——:o:——

HOW I BECAME A DETECTIVE.

I found myself early in life—through the untoward act of a defaulting trustee—financially crippled and thrown suddenly and entirely upon my own resources.

I had not received the benefit of any commercial training whatsoever, as it had been hoped that my means would prove sufficiently adequate to enable me to live, if necessary, without work; and though fortunately blessed with a certain amount of innate business ability, felt that existence for me was likely to prove tedious and precarious unless something "turned up," and that, whatever it might be, pretty quickly.

I looked round about me, tried my hands at all kinds of what-I-could-get-hold-of sorts of occupations, chiefly of a clerical character; but work as I might, strive as I could, what with the excessive competition in the fields I was labouring, and my own personal dislike to the duties—such as they were—I had to fulfil, I discovered it to be a difficult and discouraging struggle indeed. I could just exist, and that was all. As to advancing my position or saving money, or seeing the faintest glimmer of a hope that "something" which I had so ardently wished for presenting itself, seemed out of the question altogether, and matters became decidedly and increasingly serious.

Some kind sympathiser—one of the unpoetical and rigidly practical kind—suggested the army, and I gave that proposition—as members of Parliament say—"my most careful consideration." But the soldier of Great Britain, admire him as I do for his pluck, earnestness, and patience, is not by any means a mortal to be envied. He has at the best of times a rough-and-tumble sort of life, performing a maximum quantity of irksome, troublesome work, called duty—for a miserable, microscopical remuneration, ironically termed pay. I am fond of this country—may its great and glorious shadows never grow less—very fond; in fact, I have a liking for it which might easily be construed into patriotism; but with all my affection and admiration I could not prevail upon myself—do what I would—to assist in its proper defence, and place my life at the disposal of the first unrighteous enemy which might present itself for the munificent recompense of about a few halfpence per day, which is the amount generally handed to our soldiers after deducting the cost of their rations, socks, pocket-handkerchiefs, postage stamps, cigarettes, and the like.

I wasn't tall enough for the higher (please excuse this expression, it is really not intended for a play upon words) and better paid class of military, the Guards, and should (had I enlisted) have been relegated of the full rank of the genus Atkins of the Infantry.

Well, there were other things to do. Of course there were, for those who could do them; as, for instance, omnibuses and cabs to drive, papers to sell, and crossings to sweep, and so forth; but, alas, although I could speak well, and write easily no less

than five different languages, I had not received any training whatever for these duties, and to attempt to take up any of them without a due preparation, and without knowing one's London and its ways peculiarly and extensively, would be absolutely profitless.

Happy thought! the inspiration of a young, successful, far-seeing, though withal romantic friend. Why not become a detective? Ay, why not? And the thoughts of Fouche and other unspeakable and unreachable heroes in the heights of investigating fame dazzled me. Before many hours had elapsed I had despatched to the Scotland Yard authorities a letter, stating, in a somewhat laudatory manner, that I was very ambitious to become a detective, a part for which I believed nature and my present circumstances had expressly intended me for, &c., and a great deal more or less to the same effect.

After some days—the Governmental officials of this country never hurry themselves in replying to communications made to them; it wouldn't do if they did, for it would fail to look "official" if an ungraceful haste were indulged in; besides there is nothing like a little delay in these matters, as it gives the patient, unwearying British taxpayer an opportunity of being impressed by the ponderous importance of the many departments of the service, and he thinks that he is getting something for his money, even if it should only be the privilege of waiting the greater part of a fortnight or so for a reply to a simple request which an ordinary business establishment having ten times the amount of correspondence, and only half the number of hands to deal with it, would readily and easily give by return of post—I received a reply

something to the following effect, printed on a fools-cap sheet of paper:—

WHITEHALL PLACE, S.W.

"TO MAURICE MOSER,
11114, Blank Street,
Camden Town, N.W.

"In reply to your application, if you are steady, able to read and write, are not less than five feet seven inches in height, nor over thirty-five years of age, and have not more than two children dependent upon you for support, you should fill in the enclosed form, giving references, and return the same to me.

"(Signed) ABC-XYZ,
"Chief Commissioner of the Police."

I was a little bit staggered when I received these two formidable documents, wondering whether Fouché and my other heroes were ever requested to favour the authorities with height, age, references, and particulars respecting their progeny—that is, if they had any. Of course, although a little bit hazy about the matter, I bowed at once to the supreme wisdom of the authorities respecting their ideas of the qualifications of, and requirements from, the candidates for the detective service, but it has never yet, down even to this present day, been satisfactorily demonstrated to my mind why it should be necessary, before a man is supposed to be competent to detect crime and track down wrong-doers, that he should have to be a certain height and only possess a given number of children, and I can only, in accounting for this state of things, come to the conclusion that the original founders of the Criminal Investigation Department were men of considerable physique, and faithful adherents to the principles inculcated by Malthus.

I, however, replied to the request without any delay. I went so far as to assure the authorities that I was steady, that I believed I could read and write, and also that (with the assistance of a tape measure) I had satisfied myself that I met the regulation requirements in regard to height; further, that my age was twenty-two, and that up to the date indicated I had no children whatever dependent upon me.

It was very evident that the Scotland Yard officials were offended in some way or other, or, after consideration, must have thought that they had replied to my original application many days too soon, and, therefore, they would treat this communication with still further delay, for it was quite three weeks before I heard anything more of it, which gave me ample time to reflect what an unmitigated blessing officialdom is, and also the opportunity of retracting the offer of my services had I on further consideration felt so disposed.

When the acknowledgment did arrive it was short and to the purpose—something after this wise:—

"WHITEHALL PLACE, S.W.

"TO MAURICE MOSER,
11114, Blank Street,
"Camden Town, N.W.

"You are hereby requested to present yourself here on Monday next at 10 a.m. to verify the heights, measurements and qualifications given in your form of application.

"ABC-XYZ,
"Chief Commissioner of Police."

The morning duly arrived, and I and about forty other individuals (presumably candidates) of all shapes, makes, sizes, and degrees, presented ourselves

at the "Yard" as per instructions, standing in little knots or groups outside, criticised somewhat severely and rudely by passers-by and the casual onlookers who had gathered around the entrance, our appearance apparently affording them no little amusement.

One by one we were called into the office and directed into an inner sanctum, divided by a curtain, at one side of which an intelligent and benevolent looking gentleman, the chief surgeon to the police, Mr. Timothy Holmes, sat at a table, the other side of the curtain being used as a dressing room.

I stripped, and the surgeon sounded my chest and took its dimensions, measured my height and noted my weight, examined my eyes and made me (stark naked as I was) hop round the room first on one leg and then on the other, like an animated stork, to ascertain whether I had any varicose veins lurking about in some odd corner or other of my anatomy, then told me to dress, which was a matter easier said than done—as several others were also occupied in the same duties, and the place not being over well lighted, the various little heaps made up of our clothes got considerably mixed up in the process. I know that I myself came away, as a souvenir of the occasion, with one sock, a grey one, belonging to a man in Mile End, and a stocking, not too clean, with as many holes in it as a colander, the property, as I afterwards learned, of a rather superior-looking individual who humm'd and ha'd a great deal, residing at Bayswater. I was then shown into another room, the "funking" department, where each candidate waits to know the result of the medical examination. I was soon told "all right," and requested to come on the following Monday to undergo drill.

I turned up on that day at the Wellington Barracks for that purpose, being by this time a "probationer," enjoying a wage of 15s. per week, which is payable each Wednesday, the authorities keeping three days' pay in hand as some little check upon one's movements generally, and any tendency to extravagance in particular. On the ground were an inspector and a sergeant, both of whom had been in the army—these were our drill masters, and a batch of the raw, oh! so raw, material, called "recruits."

I am afraid I wasn't altogether a conspicuous success at the drill; I was, perhaps, a little flurried, for I hadn't been quite able to see, in the first place, why Mr. Timothy Holmes should have appeared so solicitous regarding my general muscular development and agility, and now, in the second place, I was almost bewildered to think that I had to go through all the torturous evolutions of the "duck-step" and numerous other acrobatic performances, apparently so necessary to qualify one for the important, mysterious, and responsible duties connected with criminal investigations. Whilst thus cogitating I was suddenly and somewhat roughly called out of the ranks and told, with something approaching a sneer, garnished with some bad and forcible language, that unless I displayed a little more interest in my drill I should be sent back to Scotland Yard. Well, I didn't want any further delay in my progress towards becoming a detective, and, therefore, made what amends I could. It appears that "Mr. Sergeant" objected to my performance of the action of the official "stand at ease." I made a weary mess of it, I am afraid, drawing my foot too far back or smacking my hands together too heavily, perhaps both—whatever it was,

or is, I cannot to this day make out. That portion of my duties was always a source of difficulty and terror to me, and always would have been, even if I had remained in the force for a century.

Ten to twelve and two to four—these were the hours which for six weeks or so were devoted by me to the perfection of the various accomplishments required before becoming a fully-fledged member. At the end of that period I, and nearly all the others, were "passed" by the Assistant-Commissioner as competent in drill, and a batch of us were thereupon "told-off" from the ground and marched to the "Yard." There we selected our wardrobe, which consisted of

A new and old Tunic
" " " Pair of Trousers.
" " " Pair of Boots
" " " Helmet.
" " " Belt.
A Pair of Leggings.
" Waterproof Cape.
" Truncheon and case.
" Rattle (now replaced by a whistle),
An Instruction Book.

Such little luxuries as shirts, shaving materials, slippers, tooth brushes, and underclothing are not included, and these, with the gloves so essential to the finish and completeness of the proper British police uniform, have to be purchased by the constable himself, and are generally to be had from gentlemen of the Jewish persuasion, who hang about on "passing" days, and who are always anxious to sell such articles (at a profit, of course) to the young, inexperienced, and sometimes rough "new 'uns." For a policeman to be discovered on duty without his

gloves would be a grave breach of one of the unwritten regulations of the constabulary, never mind whether they fit or not, or whether they have big fingers and long thumbs ; so long as they are gloves and are white for summer and black for winter, the etiquette of the force demands their full recognition.

The new clothes are made in stock sizes, but with the assistance of one's own efforts coupled with those of the police tailor, they are soon knocked into something of a fit, and it is remarkable to me how well the uniforms do fit, considering everything.

The old ones—well, you must just do what you can with them, hoping and trusting in your bosom of bosoms that those handed to you will not have formerly belonged to some member of the force, either double or about half your size.

The new things are for use in the daytime, the old ones for night work ; just as a cabby puts his best horse in for the sunshine, and his worst for the moonlight, so does a policeman use his clothes.

The boots—oh, those boots, the thoughts of them! —are also stock sizes, but after you have rubbed through a few spare layers of cuticle with their help it is wonderful how one manages to get along so comfortably with them, for they are thick, huge, unwieldy, shapeless things, minus instep, nearly as broad as long, and for a time squeak terribly, three and a-half squeaks to the step. I've counted them often. Many a time, when new, has their music accompanied me in the lonely vigils of the night, to the amusement of the casual passer-by, and to the disgust of enterprising wrong-doers.

The helmets were my one difficult task. I had a job to get them to fit properly, to stop on when

donned, to do anything, in fact, but either get over my ears or down the nape of my neck.

The cape is sometimes new; as often not. In the latter case its porosity distinguishes it.

I musn't on any consideration overlook the instruction book; it is a most wonderful production, bound in stiff, white binding, and contains about 400 pages; in it are all sorts and manners of things. Dozens of columns of instructive regulations, equalling the Ten Commandments and several series of the Thirty-nine Articles, all rolled into one in a way that is fearful and wonderful. I calculate that if a policeman—the average policeman, I mean—was set to study that book, he could, having nothing else whatever to do, with hard and constant work, perhaps manage to master its contents in about fifteen years, and it would take an extra five years for the due digestion of the new "orders," which would creep in while he was reading up the old ones.

In this book are explained to you all the duties, how to fold your clothes, how to serve summonses, how to address your superiors, how to speak to your —no, I daren't say anything about inferiors—and you are also instructed how to give evidence; that it is not considered "good form" in the force to call the magistrate your "washup," as sometimes do the vulgar, illiterate, and intoxicated persons who are occasionally placed under your charge, and a great deal more to much the same effect. This book is one of those things which would afford Mark Twain, or some other competent humorist, a life's time of genuine and unadulterated amusement; it is a thing to be seen to be appreciated, and to be read

to be cursed. Mine at the present moment, is, I believe, though I am not quite sure, somewhere at the bottom of the Regent's Canal.

After receiving all these articles, an operation which, as may be supposed, takes up a considerable amount of time, you practise for about twenty minutes, in an outer office, the recital of the oath of allegiance.

You are then (in batches) marched into the chamber of the Chief Commissioner, who speaks a few kindly words of advice, gives you a little homily upon sobriety, honesty, punctuality, and some other cardinal virtues which a policeman ought to possess, all of which you duly appreciate but entirely forget through nervousness. His "Chiefship" then reads out the oath which you have been practising, and which by now you have or ought to have thoroughly at your fingers' and tongue's end. You repeat it after him, and at its conclusion four of you together grasp the "Book" to kiss it, four kisses to about four square inches of book. You then become a fully authorised and duly qualified preserver of the peace of Her Majesty's subjects, and your pay is immediately raised to twenty-four shillings, increasing at the rate of about one shilling per year up to thirty-two shillings per week.

You again go into the "Yard" to see an official termed the station sergeant, who calls your name out and provides you with a divisional letter and a number, these having been arranged a little time previous, according to the vacancies which have occurred in the respective divisions. I was not tall enough for the A Division so was drafted as B 392, Walton

Street Police Station, Brompton, and I thus blossomed out in all the fulness of the dignity that the designation could possibly give me.

To the district mentioned I and three others were driven, accompanied by a sergeant, in a four-wheeler, with our "wardrobe" carefully and professionally tied up in those red and blue neckerchiefs, which when filled look like nothing so much as a set of huge Christmas puddings, as they rest in the available spare portion of the vehicle.

When I arrived there I once more had my name taken down by an inspector. The officials seemed very anxious not to forget one's name, and are continually asking for it, and entering in some register or other, during the whole of the ceremony. It is a way they have, I suppose, and as it does no harm, but perhaps occasionally exercises the spelling powers of the writer, I ought not to grumble at this.

My first actual duty was to come on as a "reserve," at the police station, from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., which lasted about a week, at the expiration of which I was shown a "beat" by the sergeant, and told that I should be required to be on it precisely the same hours as when on reserve. This necessitated my being at the station each night at half-past nine, when the night men paraded for duty and had the "Orders" of the day, which is practically the manifesto, giving the names of defaulters, and stating the promotions, &c., from headquarters, read over to us; also the "Information," which is a list, giving full particulars of the "cases" which had occurred during the day, and which are thus brought to the notice of each member of the force as a guide for his movements in cases of suspected personages, &c.

These things being done, the inspector looks the men all over to see that they have capes, lanterns, and staves all in order. He being satisfied, a sergeant with the words "Attention! Quick march!" leads them all off, in that single file order which is so well known to the public, to their respective beats; they then drop out one by one until the last man is placed on duty, the sergeant then returns and makes his way back again, visiting the first man who fell out, and the others all in regular order, and this three distinct times during the night.

The sergeant visits and supervises the men, the inspector supervises the sergeant, and the superintendent visits, at (for obvious reasons) irregular intervals, the inspectors.

Single men live in the divisional station-house, married men elsewhere, but they must reside within the range of the division.

The whole of the hours of the night duty are carried through without any intermission or relief; those of the day are divided into two parts, thus:

A would go on 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.
B „ „ 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
C „ „ 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Night and day duty are taken for one month alternately, and each month a week day and a Sunday off are allowed.

For holidays, see "Instruction Book."

A policeman walks about twenty miles a day or night when on duty, and the beats are changed each month, and I believe by the system now in vogue every street in London is covered both day and night.

My beat was in the district which included Ennismore Gardens, and above all lively, or rather

deadly, places in the world, Brompton Cemetery. Well do I remember the ghastly appearance the place (when my heart literally sank down somewhere in the regions of my boot heels) had for me in the early period of my experiences; but after a little while the nervousness and unpleasant feeling wore off, and I walked my "rounds" as though I had been in the manner born to it.

There is a lot to do at night, lonely as the dark may be thought—more, in fact, than in the daytime. Doors and windows have to be seen to; it is astonishing how exceedingly careless the British householder invariably is in neglecting to fasten these properly. Public-houses must close to the minute; and elderly inebriated gentlemen have to be carefully piloted up the front steps of their residences and placed tenderly inside the passage. The little domestic differences and arguments which occur if Mrs. Elderly Gentleman should happen to be waiting to open the door are highly diverting. Every beat, in some way or other, supplies the policeman with an immense amount of amusement and reflection.

One thing a constable is expected not to do, that is, smoke when on duty; the deprivation of this is a terrible punishment in cold and cheerless weather to a smoker, and I am afraid the regulation is very often broken through, for a man must be something more than human if he can resist "just one pipe" with the thermometer, say, ever so many degrees below zero. All that has to be done is to exercise sufficient care that the "superior" does not detect you, otherwise the opportunities are fairly plentiful, and are not unnaturally freely taken advantage of.

An officer on night duty gets quite a "connection" in the range of his beat. A friendly landlord of a public-house here and another one there often supply what is greatly appreciated—a cheery, hot glass of grog to the almost half-starved mortal. The servants, the female ones, of the houses in the neighbourhood are generally open for a gossip (although all this is expressly against the regulations), between the area railings in the evening, after the dinner things are cleared away, when sundry dainty tit-bits find their way to the palate of "Mr. Policeman." Should he be single, good-looking, and amiable, our police-officer never need go short of a supper, that is, I take it, if he knows his duty properly. One of the most welcome events in the policeman's nightly career is the approach of the travelling coffee-stall. A cup of hot, well-made beverage of this description is always appreciated at night or early morning, and I really don't know what many of the poor fellows would do without the coffee-stall keepers. If ever I become a rich man, sufficiently well off to be able to do some good in the world, the first thing I should do would be to reward handsomely everyone of the coffee-stall keepers who could prove having supplied the weary policeman with this most grateful relief during his rounds of duty.

What with the pretty servants (and if a policeman does not, in a very short time, know every cook and housemaid in every house in his district, I do not give him much credit for enterprise), the friendly publicans, the elderly gentlemen already referred to, the coffee-stall keepers, the club-men returning home in early morning, generally in batches of three, arm-in-arm, on the principle that union is strength, singing

refrains with not over much regard for time, and perfectly indifferent as to tune; the tips here and the tips there, and the tips that can be made if necessary, I disagree in toto with Mr. W. S. Gilbert, and believe that not only is a policeman's life a happy one, take it all in all, but is a profitable, interesting, and exciting one, that is, providing he takes up his work earnestly, and does not go through it wearing a chronic scowl, and using a perpetual "move on there!"

I have a recollection of an incident which led me into a little temporary trouble once, and which is perhaps worth detailing.

Sobriety, as I mentioned on page 25, is one of the cardinal virtues policemen are supposed to possess, and I must say that they do possess it as a body, for a more temperate set of men it is impossible to find. The rules are severe and the punishment salutary regarding insobriety, and a fine is inflicted upon, and a reprimand given to, any officer found in a public-house during his "turn" of duty, unless he can prove having been called in to quell a disturbance or to exercise his official functions in some way or other. One day in July—a conspicuously hot month in a particularly hot year—I had been on my beat for about three hours in the sweltering sun and hot dust, which the clothes are powerless against—was ever such a silly fashion instituted, compelling the police to wear dark blue uniform in summer?—and, as I was suffering from a "prodigious" thirst, I picked out a public-house in a shady, quiet corner, where I thought I should be unobserved, and went down the narrow passage to the bar, and asked for some lime-juice—don't smile, please, at the idea of policemen drinking lime-juice, but that really was what I

ordered. I had just raised the glass to my lips, when who should walk in but my sergeant, who in a loud voice asked, "What are you doing here, sir?" I was vexed at thus being discovered, but too thirsty to say anything until I had finished my "drink," when I explained that I was compelled to get some refreshment. Mr. Sergeant duly reported me, and I was "fined" half-a-crown—the only fine I ever had during the whole of my police or detective experience—but when the matter was reported, the superintendent quietly turned the tables upon the sergeant by asking him what he was doing in the public-house, and the hesitating response which was made convinced us all that he had gone into the public-house for exactly the same purpose that I had, only that particular sergeant, as was well known, had a soul entirely above lime-juice. Sometimes great amusement is caused by the tricks and practical jokes played upon new comers by the more seasoned members of the force. I distinctly remember being a sufferer myself at the early stage of my constabulary career. It happened thus:—One night I was greatly alarmed to see on the top of the railings close by the entrance to the Cemetery, a ghastly goblin, unearthly sort of a figure, with its head bent down, and its wings outspread, an uncanny object of some kind or other, I could not make out what, in the somewhat dull night. It seemed to move backwards and forwards with the breeze, as though it had movement, and I watched it for some time, and grew much agitated as to what it could be; I was alone, not a sound could I hear but the wind, which moaned through the trees and stones in the graveyard, when presently I heard

what I thought was a shriek, and felt then that it was getting quite time for me to do something, so I drew my staff, rushed across to where the object was, seized it, when a hearty burst of laughter from behind a tombstone caused me to appreciate the fact that two of my comrades had, with some considerable trouble, fixed a dead fowl, which they had found in the middle of the road close by, in the position I have described. The shriek which I thought I heard was the smothered laughter of one of the men who had so heartily entered into the fun of the thing. It was a long time before I heard the last of my adventure; it was the common talk of the station-house for at least a month, and Mr. Superintendent, a really decent, true-hearted sort of fellow, though strict and stern on duty, indulged in no little laughter at my expense, and when he met me in plain clothes one day, remarked that I did not appear to have "reported" the occurrence.

A great deal of right-down genuine bon-homme exists in the force, among both officers and men. Occasionally, however, a "crossed" superior gets in and makes matters very uncomfortable. I could give many instances of the unkind actions of some of those armed with a brief petty authority, which they exercise in a very unbecoming and injudicious manner; but as a rule the "nasty" one is pretty well tabooed by the majority, and his life and duty after a while does not become altogether pleasant.

One of the many trials a young "bobby" has to contend with is the impertinence—in fact, the absolute rudeness, of the small boys of the street, who somehow or other intuitively and at once detect a new comer; they picked me out immediately. I

suppose it was because I had not fully acquired the well-known measured tread, or that I did not fill my uniform up properly. I certainly felt that it was something of the kind. These young scamps will deliberately and without the slightest compunction make all sorts of faces at the new man, "yah" at him, cheek him, even to putting their baskets down on the pavement at his feet in order to emphasise their indifference, and sometimes proceeding so far as to place a thumb at the end of their nose, an action which is both insolent and derisive, whereupon the young bobby blinks his eyes, looks all sorts of murderous things at the boy, and with difficulty restrains his temper. The experienced policeman, if he should accidentally meet with treatment of this kind, passes on with a laudable contempt, as though such beings as boys had never been invented.

Cabmen, 'bus drivers, and conductors who occasionally have to be corrected or "moved on" at busy corners, are a source of trouble also; they possess a fund of sarcastic, slangy chaff of a decidedly unpleasant character, which is keenly felt by the junior constable, who is no match for these individuals, and all he can do is to remain passive, and should they refuse to "get on," quietly take the numbers of their vehicles. This generally has a very beneficial effect if done with a calm exterior.

Drunken women, the elderly and "seasoned" ones in particular, are a great annoyance; they are invariably obstinate and loud-voiced, and can raise a crowd in a street sooner than anything or anybody else that I know of; they can scratch, too, as I have learned to my cost.

There was one little old woman, who regularly

gave us trouble in Montpelier Avenue. She, when not in gaol, was generally very busy getting drunk. gave us trouble in Montpelier Avenue. She, when houses, commence to sing and shriek, and blaspheme in a most dreadful manner, with the result that, in a few minutes, all the boys in Brompton, and not a few grown-up people, would gather round her and tease her, making her still more violent. She was a character well-known to the police, and generally went by the name of "Kathleen." She was Irish, and possessed a wooden leg. When she was told to "move on," she simply sat down in the middle of the pavement and smiled and smirked in her own peculiar maudlin manner, and if the policeman, not knowing her peculiarities, had courage enough to attempt to pick her up to "run" her in, out would pop the wooden leg from beneath her bedraggled petticoat, and before the officer knew where he was, he found himself, in this extraordinary manner, jerked into the mud in the roadway amid the jeers and laughter, and to the intense amusement, of everybody there. So expert had this dame become that a "green" constable was invariably put up to arrest her, always with the above results, thus raising a laugh against himself by his comrades. The proper way, I found out afterwards, was to let Kathleen sit down as was her usual wont, then get two or three more constables, tie her wooden and other leg together, and bodily carry her to the station. This was a frequent operation, as she managed in some wonderful way or other to nearly always have just sufficient money about her to pay the ridiculously small fines the magistrate inflicted. Kathleen, to my knowledge, was brought before the "beak" some twenty times.

After my first experience I generally fought very shy of her, hoping that she would wander her way on to some other man's beat to be dealt with by him.

A night policeman, though it is considered irregular, takes some supper with him, bread and cheese, or something of that kind in one, and a can of tea or coffee, or sometimes a beverage of a greater potency, in the other, of his coat tail pockets. This can is of a particular shape, being made by a particular man at a particular shop in a particular street which I will not mention, and for the particular purpose it is required it is flat, and has a depression in the bottom like a wine bottle, is provided with a brass screw cap, and holds about a pint. The depression serves a very useful purpose, as it just fits the burner of the ordinary street gas lamp, which the policeman, when the coast is clear, climbs and fastens the can on to in a very few minutes; then he has the satisfaction of enjoying a midnight meal, some portion at least of which is hot.

I remember my first experience of tea-warming only too well. I had bought the can—a new one—on the recommendation of the man on the next beat the same day. About two o'clock in the morning I laboriously climbed the lamp-post, which is not by any means as easy as it looks, whilst you have your helmet, cape, staff, and various other impediments on, and sat astride the iron bar, which stretches out in order to rest the cleaner's ladder against, and managed to fix my can on, and with my legs dangling down, an exceedingly uncomfortable position, awaited the result. This was a rather different one to that which I had anticipated, for I had barely settled myself on to my perch before I heard the

gruff, stern voice of the superintendent, who had unexpectedly come round, saying, "Now then, 392, what are you doing there; is your 'beat' up in the sky somewhere?" I felt exceedingly foolish, of course; and I know I looked it. To make matters worse, whilst I was turning round to reply, for my back only presented itself to the view of the superintendent, the can exploded, smashed the lamp into smithereens, covering both of us with tea and broken glass. I almost dropped off my resting-place in sheer fright, and didn't I just get a "wigging" from my superior, who was rather a dandy in his dress—always being admirably clean and spick and span. I was, of course, duly reported, and mulcted in a fine of some three and tenpence—the cost of the damage—besides the loss of my can and my tea. Needless to say that I was more careful afterwards; but I have laughed heartily over that incident many times since then. I remember so well seeing the superintendent's beard wet with my tea, and the intensely severe look of disgust he favoured me with when I tried to blurt out some ridiculous excuse or other for my conduct, and to which he replied by abruptly saying, "Get to your duty, sir, and don't make such an ass of yourself again."

I had about nine months of this kind of experience, sandwiched with a large number of laughable incidents of the above description, when one morning I was summoned to the "Yard" and selected—this through the kindly influence of Superintendent Cutbush—to go to Paris, in attendance upon the Royal Commission at the Exhibition there, my salary being exactly doubled, and, as the indoor servants say, "everything found." This was a stroke of unusually

good luck, and I was truly and deeply grateful for the lift up. My stay there was an extremely pleasant one, one of the most gratifying results being that at the conclusion of my duties, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales presented me with a handsome breast-pin. No wonder the Heir-apparent is so popular; he never overlooks the opportunity of giving any official, whoever he may be, whether high or low, any encouragement which may be in his power to give. Sir P. Cunliffe Owen, the secretary, also kindly gave me a recommendation to be drafted into the detective department.

Then, and not till then, began the real experiences I had so much wished and hoped for, some of which I have tried to relate to the best of my ability and recollection in other pages of this little book, and promotion generally followed. I entered as a detective-constable of the third class, reached the first class, then third class sergeant, to first ditto, then on to my inspectorship. I reached this position all within the space of about four years, one, I believe, and I am proud to say it, of the quickest promotions ever made in the department. I resigned in 1887 (a step which fortunately, up to the present, I have no cause to regret), owing to a very favourable "outside" offer made to me, and which I accepted. At my resignation I received a No. 2 Certificate, "Conduct very good," and must say that, although there are so many matters of an irksome character constantly cropping up, chiefly within the department, owing to the intense amount of red-tapeism with which the whole of our detective system is bound, take it all together, I had, with a very few exceptions (for there were, of course, a few uncouth, ill-mannered

officers, and always will be) a pleasant and gratifying career. I met in the force a number of down-right good fellows, some of whom were ever ready to do what they could to assist me in the performance of oftentimes the most arduous duties—one of whom, Chief Constable Williamson, stands out for the genuineness of his character and the kindliness of his disposition. Every man in the force had in that gentleman a friend willing at any time to assist, if he only saw the one requiring his help was mindful of his duty. The sum total of my work during my connection with the Yard being that I made a very large number of arrests, and recovered property to the value of about £60,000.

The detective department, strange to say, is not, as many people imagine, at Scotland Yard at all, but in reality at 21 and 22, Whitehall Place. The force altogether consists of one superintendent, three chief inspectors, nine inspectors, numerous sergeants, and about three hundred and fifty rank and file. There are twenty-five divisions in the metropolis, each one having its local inspectors and sergeants and men; these are under the superintendentship of the "Yard," which occasionally sends one of its own men to assist the divisional officers in any more than usually intricate case.

I am taking the opportunity here to point out a few weak spots in our detective system. The first, and the chief one, is the inadequate remuneration offered to the officials who ought, considering the nature of their work, to be entirely placed beyond temptation. Beyond an increase of 2s. 6d. per week per year there is little, if anything, to tempt a man to remain in the force on this wage, which com-

mences at 24s., with an addition of 1s. per day for plain clothes allowance. Out of this the officer must himself provide everything, is expected to contribute to the superannuation fund at least 25 per cent. of his earnings, and compelled to live within, at whatever expense or inconvenience, a distance of three miles from headquarters. Had I remained until now in the Department, I should have been, even with my unusually rapid promotion, the recipient of the lordly sum of £182 per year, less the deduction alluded to, besides a further one of 15s. upon the death of an inspector for the benefit of his widow, and 10s. 6d. for his orphans. It is impossible to expect—and I say it because I have experienced the difficulties and temptations—to obtain educated, alert men, suitable for the service, on such paltry terms as these, and on the grounds of poor remuneration alone the individuals selected for the purpose of carrying out some of the most delicate and important work that can possibly be conceived, will always, with very few exceptions, be those who are utterly unsuited for the duty, i.e., the artisan and agricultural classes.

In addition, the library and band fund have to be contributed to, so that salaries are really very considerably reduced. The officer is expected to dress as a gentleman, and I want to know how, in the name of all that is equitable, can a man, crippled on every hand like this, get about or obtain the assistance of informers, the most necessary adjuncts to a detective's success?

It may be suggested that if a report be submitted stating that an informer is prepared to divulge information, payment will be granted. Quite so; I and

others have had some bitter experiences on this subject.

The supposed informer has to sign a receipt, even if it should be only for a paltry sum of a few shillings, and the detective, to show his bona fides, has to divulge his informer's address at headquarters. What is the result? The informer gets completely disgusted at having his whereabouts made almost public property, and will never assist again. That informers are absolutely necessary is undoubted. I defy any detective officer to go into the haunts of certain classes and obtain the information he desires without such assistance. He must, therefore, employ some one who can give him this information, but unless it is made worth the informer's while, these men will decline to come forward.

The second is, that the whole system of out-of-pocket expenses allowance should be investigated, and placed upon a more equitable basis. How can men be expected to work with strength, energy, and determination, when every penny of their personal expenses has to be accounted for? A fixed and more liberal scale should be made. It is within my recollection on one occasion, while engaged upon an important case, to have paid twopence for a 'bus fare. When my "contingents account" sheet (a sheet made out weekly) went in, and which gives the particulars warranting the expenditure, I was met with the remark that the fare from such to such a place was only one penny. I explained—which was a fact—that in my haste I had unfortunately got on to a pirate 'bus, hence the twopence instead of a penny expended. My explanation was, however, after, I should think, quite thirty shillings' worth of labour,

time, and paper expended in reporting, referring, &c., "disallowed," and I was the loser by the transaction. It is this pettifogging sort of treatment which soon disgusts one.

Further, as a detective officer of some years' thorough and practical experience of Scotland Yard and the whole of its machinery, I am constrained to say that the great and chiefest reason of the inability of our Criminal Investigation Department to thoroughly grapple with crimes of the descriptions which of late have assumed such dreadful and horrifying proportions, and to give that good account of itself which every reasonable rate-paying citizen would naturally expect, arises, not from the fault of any particular individual, but from the general incompetency—owing to its faulty and cumbersome construction—of the whole body.

Too often have I, myself, painfully experienced the harassing minutiae attending the efforts of all concerned in the rampant red-tapeism which reigns supreme in the administration of that department, not to believe but that by the wholesome help of a few energetic reformers a workable system could be easily set up, and the old regime disestablished and done away with, as it ought to have been years and years ago.

In this article, already much longer than it ought to be, it is impossible for me to do more than but casually, as it were, note wherein lies the principal sources of the weaknesses and suggest what I consider to be the remedy. On some other occasion, perhaps, I may be permitted to give other examples of the almost countless number of difficulties, doubts, and fears which surround and choke even the best

intentioned efforts of those employed in the detective service. But it will not be out of place if I here mention that I am firmly of opinion that the detective department should be entirely separated in every possible way from that of the uniformed police, and the Assistant Commissioner, who, for the time being, is the recognised chief of the detective department, ought to have sufficient power entrusted to him to be able to act without having to consult whoever happens to be the Chief Commissioner.

A central office should be established, and the head of the Detective Department should be, of course, in direct communication with the local inspectors of each division through their respective superintendent; but not as it is now done, where a divisional detective-inspector has first to obtain the approval of his superintendent (this superintendent being in direct communication only with the chief commissioner has to submit his report to that official direct, who is compelled to re-submit it to the Detective Department for action), a backwards and forwards movement which is particularly galling to those who have to contend with it. Besides this a great deal of valuable time is lost, and very considerable friction engendered owing to important matters having to pass through so many different hands. A word in passing as to the late Chief Commissioner's temperament and some of his little ways. Sir Charles Warren could be, and was, very pleasant at times, but appeared occasionally to entirely forget that he was dealing with a civil and not a military force. Admirable as the discipline necessary for the latter may be, it is not always suitable for the former; and as an instance how impulsive that gentleman could be, I will quote

one instance of many others which, if I mistake not, might, perhaps, have been one of the causes of Mr. Munro's resignation. It was discovered about three years ago that the lost property office, which was situated at No. 21, Whitehall Place, was not large enough for the proper accommodation of this department. It was thereupon decided that the office of the Criminal Investigation Department, which then stood in the centre of Scotland Yard, should be changed for the lost property office, the latter to remove to Scotland Yard, and the former to occupy the vacated offices at 21 and 22, Whitehall Place.

The then chief superintendent of the C. I. Department was one day, to his great surprise and annoyance, informed by Sir Charles Warren that the offices were to be at once cleared out. The chief pointed out to Sir Charles the difficulties that would arise, having to remove some 30,000 sets of papers and all the books, &c., but Sir Charles was inexorable, and would listen to no excuse whatever, but sent word over at four o'clock saying that the detectives were to be at 21, Whitehall Place, at ten the following morning, and out they had to go, holus bolus, with the result that an intense confusion ensued, certain sets of papers which were required could not be found for at least a month, having got so mixed up in removing, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the officials could get through the work at all.

The men at present comprising the detective staff are, as far as they go, satisfactory; they are invariably honest, and in spite of the extreme irksomeness of their surroundings, always ready to do their duty to the best of their ability, but they suffer greatly from "rawness," and owing to their having to

undergo and pass through the ordeal of training, perhaps necessary for a police officer, but which is absolutely useless for a detective, they suffer from all the peculiarities of carriage, gait, and dress which unmistakably mark the ordinary preserver of the peace, and which, in many instances, must greatly mar his chances of success, for the ordinary policeman, be he disguised in whatever fashion he chooses, is, on account of the "drill" he has received, readily recognised by the 'cute eyes of every "wrong-'un" from Mile End to Mayfair.

The red-tapeism which permeates the whole department harasses and hampers the detective, whether in division or at headquarters, and the frequent unnecessary reports, and the inability of the inspectors, on whom practically falls all the work, to act independently, and to follow their own judgment, which is in many cases far superior to those above them in authority, is extremely trying, and tends to stifle the interest which many would evince in their duties.

To give yet another instance of this elaborate circumlocution office, we will suppose that some important "case" has been reported to the department. This may have come through the division or by application by a private individual. The "case" is at first looked into by the assistant commissioner.

It is then passed on to the chief constable, who sends it to the superintendent (there is only one superintendent in the detective department), and he in turn marks it out for the officer whom he considers most competent to carry it out. Thus far (only as yet having passed through three hands), so good, but the "case," after having been given to the officer, has, of

course, if it is of a pressing nature, to be immediately attended to, and the officer, though engaged knee-deep in another matter, must leave that to take the new one in hand, perhaps entirely neglecting previous investigations which have occupied him for some days, and, besides this, probably, be called upon to attend the police-court or sessions, and then at its conclusion is expected to take up the former one. This arises from an insufficiency of staff.

Again, an inspector at headquarters has to work entirely on his own account; if he wants help, he is compelled to beg permission of his superintendent to allow him the assistance of a detective sergeant or detective constable, as the case may be. This, of course, is absolutely wrong; it ought to be as it is in divisions, each inspector having a certain number (which may be increased from time to time, as occasion requires) of men allotted to him, and be made solely responsible for their actions. No "enquiries" should be given, as is now done, to detective sergeants and constables; they ought all to go through the hands of a more responsible person. I have had, myself, frequently six or seven different cases in hand, and they all have had to be neglected for want of proper assistance, not that the assistance would have been denied me if I had asked for it, but the very difficulty of obtaining such assistance considerably hampers one's progress. Strange to say, the system of an inspector having a certain number of men under his charge is actually carried out in each division, where the detective inspector has sergeants and men in proportion to the size of the division under his control, but not at headquarters, and this is one of the peculiar anomalies which no one can

possibly understand. The greatest blot of all, in my opinion, is that it is compulsory for a man, prior to his being considered eligible for the detective force to have to serve as a uniform policeman. Why should this be at all?

It is alleged by the authorities that a certain amount of experience, a certain height, and a certain discipline is necessary to make a man fit for the detective department. Was ever such ridiculous nonsense credited elsewhere? Why not have a detective school, bringing men in and training them specially? Keep them for terms of, say, three years, and, if then unsuitable, dismiss them. There is plenty of lighter work to be done for such to obtain practice upon. Perhaps it may be argued that a trial of this description has been made and turned out a failure? But the few men (I believe there were only four altogether) were spoiled by a wrong system, having had too much power vested in them at once—so characteristic of the ways and means of the "Yard."

The remedies I would suggest are:—

(1.) The entire separation of the two departments, making the uniformed police and detectives two distinct creations.

(2.) Better and more appropriate remuneration.

(3.) A sharp revision of the existing and ridiculous pension system.

(4.) The overhauling of the manner of the repayment of out-of-pocket expenses.

(5.) Employment of a competent staff of female detectives.

(6.) The increase of the detective force to at least one thousand men; the small number at present

engaged are absolutely unable to cope with the requirements of five millions of people.

(7.) The establishment of a proper training school.

(8.) A more definite understanding as to the payment and employment of "informers."

(9.) A special commission of enquiry to be established respecting the whole administration.

If only these suggestions which I have made be carried into effect, without a doubt the London detective force would in a very short time prove itself to be quite equal to any emergency, and fully capable of "watching" the criminals of this huge city of ours, which, from its enormous population alone, presents every possible opportunity for the escape of those who desire to evade the ends of justice.

REVOLUTION, ROBBERY, AND REVENGE.

The last Carlist agitation which worked the whole of Spain into a complete state of ferment had the most disastrous effects upon the younger people of that country, who, ever ready to emulate the restless daring of the intrepid Don Carlos himself, placed themselves and their lives at his disposal, and dedicated their moneys and their properties, as well as those of other people, to him. They took no thought of the dangers which accompanied their wild doings, nor the slightest account of the difficulties which beset them, but all interested, from the humblest at the plough to the highest at the court, excited by adventure and stimulated by the prospects of position, advancement, and the probability of gain, plunged themselves headlong, boldly, and recklessly, into the very thick of that great political turmoil, which, for a time seemed to threaten the disturbance of the general peace of the whole of Continental Europe.

The fiery untamed youths, students, shopmen, clerks, and others grouped themselves into miscellaneous bands and formed secret societies for the more effectual support of the "movement," but were hunted by the authorities out of their meeting places as often as they met, turned into the open and freely dispersed. However, perfectly undaunted, again and again they managed to re-establish themselves, pass resolutions, vote men and munitions, and seek further

supplies of the things needful, with a pertinacity bordering almost upon fanaticism, and when at last utterly defeated, and driven by sheer force out of the kingdom whose power they were endeavouring to thwart and overturn, they obtained refuge in France, Belgium, Holland, England, and numerous other countries, and there re-formed themselves into compact bodies and still agitated and harassed the Spanish Government from these distances by sending whatever help they could, in whatever shape they were able, to the dusky, garlic-eating friends they had left behind with the hopes of being able to stimulate them also into rebellion against the powers that were. Some little further effect was thus produced, but the whole were eventually, effectively and entirely suppressed. To such a pitch did the excitement among these young people reach that their heads were completely turned, and even those who had been credited with being well-behaved and honourable, forgot home, honesty, themselves, everything, performed actions and took part in proceedings which, in their more sobered moments, they must have been heartily ashamed of, and many noble families of that country are to this day reputationless and utterly disgraced because of the wrong and untoward doings of some of their misguided members during the period of the agitation.

Want of funds was no doubt the immediate cause of many of the infamous and criminal practices which a number of the supporters of Don Carlos found themselves involved in, and for this reason, to a very considerable extent the laws were often derided, set at naught, and defied, and embezzlement, fraud, forgery, and rapine frequently indulged in.

One would hardly feel disposed to suggest, even with the greatest stretch of the imagination—the district being so well known by almost everybody—that the parish of sweet, silent, sylvan Sydenham would be likely to contain anything of so disturbing and startling a character as the headquarters of the English branch of the Carlist Association, but, nevertheless, such was the fact, and the peaceful inhabitants of that pretty district will perhaps hardly appreciate or feel grateful to me for reminding them that during that period, regularly for months, some of the most important meetings in connection with the Carlist "rising" ever convened were held in a cottage not many hundred yards from the Crystal Palace. There men gathered and plotted plots, the nature of which, if explained and related, would almost turn grey the very hairs of the very residents alluded to. Little did these latter highly respectable gentlemen, who, with their equally highly respectable families, occupied the pleasant quiet houses in the neighbourhood, imagine that right under their very noses, whilst they were, perhaps, calmly sleeping their sleep, dreaming of stocks and shares and other similar innocencies, in a district apparently absolutely above suspicion, there were being hatched in their midst, in an entirely unsuspected quarter, some of the most diabolical and bloodthirsty conspiracies that were ever contemplated or concocted for the purpose of the destruction of human life.

This little knot of conspirators, some fifteen in number, hardly thought, in the apparent security of their suburban retreat, that they were known and being actively watched, and they evidently did not realise that every movement of every member

was noted by detectives, who, in the early stages of their assembling, had been made familiar with their proceedings.

The chief figure of the fire-eating fugitives was an exceedingly handsome young Spaniard, named Don Justos Gonzales Morella, a descendant of one of the oldest and best families of Madrid; he had a well set-up and lithe physique, beautiful eyes, a rich tawny complexion, with fine hair, and a beard and moustache which completed about as picturesque a personage as one could wish to see; he had plenty of "go," and was altogether a fascinating man.

To the just horror of his family he espoused the Carlist cause and threw in his lot with the agitators, carrying his enthusiasm to the extent of forging a certain signature and obtaining bonds from the Bank of Spain to a very considerable amount; then, finding the Madrid police upon his track, he promptly left the country, making his way to England, where he busied himself in getting together a number of the Carlists who were compelled, in order to preserve their own skins, almost immediately to follow him; hence his appearance at the head of the branch alluded to.

He managed, with his tact and manner, to get introduced to some of the best people in London, and the name of Don Justos Gonzales Morella figured on many cards of invitation sent out by "Society"—particularly the female portion of it, to whom he was dangerously attractive—during the time he honoured this city with his presence. He was a sad dog, however, having broken or damaged almost every feminine heart he had come in contact with, his

gallantries being innumerable; in fact, but for his weakness in this respect, Morella might still have been in the enjoyment of everything that love, gaiety, aplomb, and beauty in this country could have secured for him. It was not to be, however, and the rabid Carlist and accomplished lady-killer found himself at last, greatly to his disgust and disappointment, over-reached and arrested.

Morella had greatly admired a young French lady —a remarkably pretty and accomplished girl, a governess in the family of some friends he had made early on his arrival in England—and he soon found an opportunity of being introduced to her, which introduction took place at a concert at St. James's Hall. A friendship sprang up between them, which soon ripened into an intimate relationship. Morella at first wanted, or in all probability pretended to want, to marry the girl, but her guardians (she was an orphan) strongly objected, as they could not learn Morella's antecedents, he being prevented, for obvious good reasons, from saying whom he really was. They then agreed to elope, and Paris was reached by the pair, who remained for some considerable time there together, finally returning to London. Morella soon grew tired of his companion; quarrels ensued, and eventually, as they had both considered and protested that their affection was entirely above the necessity of such a commonplace proceeding as a wedding ceremony, the girl was abandoned and entirely deserted, Morella managing to keep himself out of her reach, by frequently moving about and changing his names and addresses, hoping by these means to tire her out, and put an end to her importunities for assistance and protection.

The young lady, by name Felice Cartine, thus basely discarded by her lover, and having, through her own rash and thoughtless conduct, entirely forfeited the respect, sympathy, and confidence of the family in whose service she had been so long engaged, turned with her child—where only she could, where hundreds and thousands of others of her poor frail sisters before her had turned—into "the streets," utterly forsaken, friendless, deserted, and forgotten. One knows only too well, by the hordes of hideously-painted mortal wrecks that daily and nightly promenade our thoroughfares, what the term means, and what a terrible significance it possesses for the future of those poor cast-off members of society who —until they commit follies, the rashness of which no one would have credited them as capable of, and are unfortunate or perhaps indiscreet enough to be discovered—might continue to enjoy their share of the world's good things, and exist, amid prosperity and plenty, aye, even loved and respected.

But once a wrong step has been taken and found out, the whole of that great, ignoble, and priggish army of our highly moral Sneerwells—the feminine members in particular—are up in arms immediately, pursuing the poor victims of weakness and foolishness with a rancour as relentless and venomous as it is indescribable. However patient she may be, however acute her sufferings, however plaintive her pleading for pity, sympathy, and forgiveness, the wretched Magdalen of this nineteenth century, in this a so-called Christian country, amid a so-called religious people, especially distinguished by the sheen of its self-righteous broadcloth and the fine old-crusted flavour of its smug sanctimoniousness, is

spurned, scorned, and scoffed at by those of her own sex, who would just be as injudicious, just as weak, just as faulty, and just as guilty as she happens to be, if they could or dared.

It was a very short and rapid journey from a trusted post in a respectable family to the place where I first met Felice—a flashy house, with some flashy, disreputable people, in a flashy portion of Maida Vale, whence I had been dispatched to look for, and where I had succeeded in finding and arresting, a woman who had stolen some elderly inebriated fool's watch and chain and money.

I was struck with Felice's appearance, as she was quietly dressed, and possessed every evidence of having been well brought up: a striking contrast to the life she had then just commenced to lead. When she learned that a detective was in the house, she expressed herself anxious to see me to ask if I could assist her in discovering the whereabouts of Morella, whom she spoke of in a very bitter, revengeful spirit, declaring that on account of his treachery she would search high and low for the purpose of punishing him in some way or other. I think I never in all my life saw any one, let alone a woman, so overcome with passion, and I felt sure that if her peccant lover had been anywhere at that moment within her reach she would have done him some personal violence.

Thoroughly roused and infuriated, she, with all the fire of her nature, hissed, "I will see him properly rewarded yet." It boded ill for Morella if he ventured to put himself within the reach of her clutches, I could see that, so giving her my name, and telling her that Scotland Yard would find me at any time if she had any information as to where Morella might

perhaps be located. I further informed her that I should be glad to hear from her, and would do what I could on her behalf, particularly as she had told me, upon my asking for particulars concerning him, that when on the Continent he had objected most strongly to visit Spain—which she had hoped they would—for the reason, as Morella confessed to her (and this was the first she had heard of it), that the Government had strong reasons for his not remaining there. She had merely thought that something purely of a political nature had taken place, and did not then trouble any more about it. When she informed me of this, I asked her if she had a photograph of Morella; whereupon she immediately produced one, which she carried about with her, and I came away with it, after having seen the woman I wanted placed in the charge of the policeman who had accompanied me.

When I got back to the "Yard," I made enquiries from some of the detectives who had been engaged in watching the band of Carlists, which soon became broken up and dispersed at the conclusion of the insurrection, there being no reason for the members continuing to meet when they discovered that their cause was rendered thoroughly hopeless. The police had entirely lost sight of the young fellow; but when I exhibited the photogroph, it was instantly recognised as being that of the suspected leader of the Sydenham gang.

Thereupon the Madrid authorities were communicated with, a description of Morella being sent, and the question asked what was known about him. A reply immediately came back that Morella not only was forbidden the country on political grounds,

but that he had also committed forgery, and had robbed the Union Bank of Spain of bonds to a large amount, and was, therefore, if I may put it in this way, very much "wanted." Thus it was, in this somewhat roundabout sort of fashion, that I came to learn something of the pedigree and something of the history of the dashing, unscrupulous young Carlist chief.

Then commenced the task of finding him. I and others searched high and low, here, there, and everywhere; visited his old haunts, sought out several of his friends and former companions, but all with the same negative and unsatisfactory results. Weeks passed this way, without any progress at all being reported.

Meantime, the pretty and revengeful Felice had not in the slightest subdued her hate or abandoned her endeavours to track Morella down if such a thing were possible, and I must say that I never saw hatred and revenge so patiently and persistently persevered in as I did at that time; in fact, she seemed rather to increase in her determination than otherwise, and at last was rewarded for her perseverance, for, having one day paid a third or a fourth visit to one of Morella's friends with a view of obtaining some news of him, she was told by this gentleman that he had seen Morella only the day previous, and had agreed with him to make up a jovial party, all Spaniards, and visit the Inventions Exhibition.

I therefore became the recipient of a telegram.

"Look out for a number of Spaniards going to Exhibition. Cartine."

By this time I had become so familiar with Morella's appearance from the descriptions so repeatedly given, and the careful and frequent studies

of the photograph, that I felt convinced, I could, with comparative ease, have myself picked him out among even the largest crowd. To assist me in my identification I learned that Morella had fought, so it was reported, no less than eight duels, chiefly in connection with endeavours to appease the honour of several gentlemen whose domestic affairs had been considerably deranged by our fire-eating friend's indiscreet amours and other peccadillos of an equally interesting and elevating character, wherein the deterring influence of the sword rather than the horsewhip is sought—and bore several scars as the result, thus rendering his recognition, as I concluded, a comparative easy task.

Accompanied by Sergeant Bartells, who was a sagacious, reliable, more-of-action-than-words sort of young man, I visited the exhibition, and together we made a very diligent, though unsuccessful, search through the grounds and various buildings. I therefore, as a final resource, determined to plant myself in such a position in the underground passage—which I daresay my readers will very well remember—that I could command a full and unbroken view of the two exits.

After waiting a considerable time, feeling very hot very uncomfortable, and, as Bartells feelingly remarked, very thirsty—for, with the immense traffic and want of ventilation, I can only describe the effects of remaining in the passage as being something equivalent to laying in a recently discharged cannon—a group consisting of four apparently very gay and frivolous foreigners came up. I soon detected from their conversation that they were Spaniards, and, among them, I fancied that I recognised Morella; but

still I was not sufficiently positive, in spite of my previous inclination to believe that I was fully capable of picking him out wherever he might be, to warrant my arresting him, and as the consequences of getting hold of the wrong man are sometimes very severe, I did not feel disposed to spoil matters by being in too great a hurry. I therefore determined to follow the four, and, making a sign to Bartells to come after me, we all passed out into the open thoroughfare.

This would be about ten o'clock (I had been engaged in the work from about two, spending the whole of the afternoon and evening in looking out for them), and they made their way, walking the whole distance, to Piccadilly, calling at several cafes for "refreshment" en route. They dallied about, in and out among the crowd of characters which usually occupy the pavements from Old Bond Street to the "Circus," for some considerable time, getting into conversation with first one and then another set of females, until "Big Ben" struck twelve. They then, still walking, proceeded towards Charing Cross, both Bartells and myself thoroughly fagged out, and ravenously hungry. Here they had a long and, judging from their continued laughter, an amusing gossip. They then all shook hands, saluted each other with a good-night, raised their hats and separated—our suspect going a short distance down Parliament Street, when he hired a hansom, and drove to Stoke Newington. There he got out, paid the driver, and let himself, with a latchkey, into a house some twenty yards further on. It was then about a quarter past one.

I had promised Felice that I would, if it was in my power to do so, let her be present at Morella's arrest. It was, she assured me, "her one great wish, a grati-

fication she could hardly too highly appreciate, besides esteeming it a particular 'personal favour.'" I must candidly confess that after all I was not too sure of my "find," and knowing nothing personally of the individual I required, I was only too pleased to have this additional means of identification should it be found necessary, so I therefore despatched Bartells in a cab for the injured lady. He was lucky enough to find her indoors, and at half-past four in the morning, in almost open daylight, we all three stood outside the house deliberating upon what was the best course to pursue under the circumstances. I planted Bartells behind a low wall in a garden at the back of the house, and requesting Felice to take her station a few yards higher up the street, I knocked loudly three or four times at the front door.

After a while, a scared, elderly lady, in all the regalia of nocturnal habiliments, popped her white-capped head out of an upper window, and, in a piping, trembling voice, asked who was there and what was wanted.

I promptly informed her that we were police-officers, and demanded admission. A considerable time elapsed before the old lady put in an appearance; she was evidently a very slow dresser, but at last she came down and unfastened the door, looking more frightened than ever and almost breathless with excitement.

I asked her if she had a Spanish gentleman in the house, and she at once replied, "Oh, yes, a Mr. Burgos." "I have a warrant for his apprehension," I replied, "and must see him forthwith." This statement nearly "did" for the old woman, who, very much overcome by the intelligence, anxiously

enquired if it was anything serious. "Well, pretty middling," I said; "but you had better show me his room." By this time I had beckoned to Felice, and she, at the old lady's suggestion, took a seat in the little front parlour, whilst I followed the ancient dame upstairs to a small bedroom at the top and back of the house, tapped at and opened the door, which was unfastened, walked in, and awoke "Mr. Burgos," who was in bed. He seemed very much perturbed at his, as he explained, being treated in that, to him, unceremonious manner, and put on a very haughty air. After I had, however, produced my warrant and read a few lines of that formidable document to him he quickly realised that such was not the occasion to cavil at any brusqueness I might have appeared to have displayed; and just at that particular moment the old lady suddenly collapsed into a faint, upon which I opened the window and whistled for Bartells to come up, Felice letting him in. Then, after we had "fixed" the old woman up again, I told Morella—for, of course, it was he—to dress himself and accompany us at once to King Street.

He didn't seem to relish the idea at all; pretended to be astonished, denied any knowledge of the crime he was charged with, and said that we should be punished for our infamous, brutal conduct, and a whole lot more to the same effect, when Bartells, whom I noticed was beginning to fume at the delay, ever practical, promptly put in with, "Look 'ere, young fellow, we've just had about enough of that. We have had nearly sixteen hours without a break or a crust in trying to get hold of you, and we can very well afford to excuse your eloquence for some other hearing and a more appre-

ciative audience." Finishing his toilet in silence, Don Justos Gonzales Morella was carefully piloted down the stairs.

When we got into the passage I requested our capture to follow us into the little parlour where Felice was sitting, and the scene that then took place beggars all my poor powers of description. In a moment Morella guessed who had been the cause of his arrest, and poured out on Felice's head a perfect volley of execrations. Felice, with a fierce light (I have often seen jealous, wronged women in real life, I have as frequently seen them upon the stage, but never shall I forget the hating triumphant smile that woman assumed) in her eyes, said not a single word; and, when we at last took our departure, we could see her, as we were leaving the room, still following every movement of Morella's with a strange mocking look until at last he succumbed to her gaze, withdrew as rapidly as he could, and became thoroughly dumbfounded and crest-fallen. We apologised to the old lady for troubling her so unceremoniously, and brought our man away.

In due time Morella was charged before the magistrate, but remanded several times owing to the non-arrival of the depositions from Spain, and here I may take the opportunity to mention the extreme hardships which extradition prisoners are called upon to undergo, with the sincere hope that the publicity I am giving to them may be the means of procuring their amelioration. If they are amended I shall feel that whatever may be the demerits—I can hardly venture to hope merits—of this little book, and I fear there are many, I shall perhaps have rendered some little service by pointing out, from time to

time, such matters as I believe are capable of more or less improvement.

Extradition prisoners are dealt with in two different ways. The first is—That at times telegrams are received at Scotland Yard from some one or other of the foreign police authorities requesting the English officials to arrest a certain person forthwith, adding that his or her extradition will be immediately applied for, the warrant in the respective country having been granted.

Provided with this telegram, the police officer in charge of the case applies, when French prisoners are concerned, to M. Taillefer, advocate to the French embassy; and in the case of Germans, to the consul-general of the German empire, &c., &c., who in turn apply to the chief magistrate at Bow Street Police Court—all extradition matters occurring within the Metropolis are attended to at Bow Street—by a sworn information being laid that the accused's extradition will in due course be demanded by their respective governments.

This is done in order to make the several foreign authorities solely responsible for the apprehensions.

The warrant is then granted, and the police officer may arrest, when a remand invariably takes place pending the arrival of the foreign depositions, the magistrate's duty being simply to see that a "prima-facie" case is made out, and to commit the prisoner to take his trial in his own country.

The warrants which have been granted simply upon the application of the foreign representatives are called provisional warrants, and great hardships are frequently experienced by foreign prisoners, who are sometimes remanded from week to week (oftentimes

for a period of two months) in the House of Detention before the depositions reach this country, when, after all, the charge may not be proved, as I have known in several instances.

And the magistrate will not accept bail in these cases.

The second is a much simpler and better one. The foreign power sends, prior to the application for the warrant, the whole of the depositions to its ambassadors in London, who in turn forward them to the Foreign Office, and then to Bow Street Police Court. The magistrate, upon perusal, may then grant a warrant, which is sent to Scotland Yard for execution. Once the prisoner is arrested, the depositions already in the hands of the magistrate are read to him, and he may, on the first hearing, be at once committed. But I may mention that even in this manner of conducting cases, foreign prisoners experience in some instances very unfair treatment—or, at least, it was so up to the time of my leaving Scotland Yard in 1887, as the prisoner, after being committed, has actually to remain in this country, even when he has pleaded guilty to the charge, fifteen days, and which is not taken into consideration at his sentence, before his extradition can take place.

The way foreign prisoners are conveyed to their respective countries is as follows:—Four days prior to the expiration of the fifteen days the officer in charge of the "case" makes his report to the superintendent, stating when the time expires, and he, in turn, submits the name of the officer who has arrested the prisoner to the Home Office. Two warrants are then issued, signed by the Home Secretary himself—one directing the keeper of the House

of Detention to hand the "body" of the prisoner to the officer, and the other for the officer, who gets a receipt upon it for the prisoner's "body" from the foreign authorities; the second warrant being, on the return of the police officer, returned to the Home Office.

Extradition prisoners for France and Italy are conveyed by the usual route to Calais; those for Germany and Austria are taken to Hamburg by water.

After the usual delay, the cause of which I have just endeavoured to explain, Morella was duly extradited, and I was charged with the proper delivery of his body to the authorities at Vigo. My readers will be surprised to learn that this was the first, and, up to the present, has been the only, extradition between Spain and England; they will perhaps be more surprised to learn that, contrary to the general belief, there is a very comprehensive treaty of extradition in force between the two countries, which applies to and covers a large number of crimes, and which I here give a copy of :—

Convention d'Extradition conclue entre l'Angleterre et l'Espagne.

Signed at London, June 4th, 1878.

Ratifications exchanged at London, November 21st, 1878.

The extradition shall be reciprocally granted for the following crimes or offences :—

1. Murder.
2. Manslaughter.
3. Administering drugs.
4. Rape.
5. Aggravated or indecent assault.
6. Kidnapping.
7. Abduction of minors.
8. Bigamy.

9. Wounding or inflicting bodily harm.
10. Assaulting a magistrate or peace or public officer.
11. Threats, by letter or otherwise, with intent to extort money or other things of value.
12. Perjury, or subornation of perjury.
13. Arson.
14. Burglary or housebreaking, robbery with violence, larceny or embezzlement.
15. Fraud by a bailee, banker, agent, factor, trustee, director, member, or public officer of any company made criminal by any law for the time being in force.
16. Obtaining money or other valuables by false pretences, or receiving same knowing them to have been unlawfully obtained.
17. (a) Counterfeiting or altering money, or bringing into circulation counterfeit or altered money.
    (b) Forgery, or counterfeiting or altering or uttering what is forged, counterfeited, or altered.
    (c) Knowingly making, without lawful authority, any instrument, tool, or engine adapted and intended for the counterfeiting of coin of the realm.
18. Crimes committed against bankruptcy law.
19. Any malicious act done to endanger persons in a railway train.
20. Malicious injury to property, if such offence be indictable.
21. Crimes committed at sea.
    (a) Piracy by the law of nations.
    (b) Sinking or destroying a vessel at sea, or attempting or conspiring to do so.
    (c) Revolt or conspiracy to revolt by two or more persons on board a ship on the high seas against the authority of the master.
    (d) Assault on board a ship on the high seas with intent to destroy life or do grievous bodily harm.
22. Dealing in slaves in such manner as to constitute an offence against the laws of both countries.

And still more surprised to hear that Spain is not, as is generally believed, the happy and safe hunting-ground for all the criminals and wrongdoers who may flee to it. If the law were properly put into force it would be a very difficult thing indeed for those who try to escape from English justice to secure a refuge in that country. But they will not in the least be surprised to learn that Scotland Yard, on the occasion of this particular arrest, found itself, from its unfamiliarity of the necessary processes to go through, in considerable undecidedness how to act. The position was a little difficult, for if I had taken Morella through any other country—say, France—the probability would be that the extradition would become forfeited and valueless, as it is impossible to tell upon what extraditionary terms that or any other foreign country might be on with Spain. Therefore, to make matters absolutely safe, instead of proceeding the usual way, I had to take Morella from Southampton by water direct to Vigo. A difficulty also arose here, for the steamship owners, not at all unreasonably, object to convey prisoners, as the passengers don't like it if it is discovered. I got out of the mess by booking passages under assumed names by the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, but this necessitated my giving Morella almost perfect freedom of action on the boat, and as he had got into such a despondingly wretched condition, I was not quite sure what he might not take it into his head to do if he had the opportunity. I managed, however, to get our berths in the same cabin, and, therefore, watched him pretty well, but at meal times he was put, and I could raise no objection to

it, right at the opposite end of the table to me, and these times proved of extreme anxiety to me, for I half expected that at any moment he might feel disposed to secrete a knife and make away with himself on the first favourable chance. Of course I did not inform the captain of the cause or intent of my journey, and, therefore, Morella and I were treated precisely in the same way as ordinary passengers, under the assumed names of Monsieurs Menchould and Autun, which led to some confusion on our arrival, for, naturally Scotland Yard had advised the Vigo authorities that Monsieurs Moser and Morella, giving our real names, would arrive by the boat from Southampton. We at length reached Vigo, after a very troublesome passage through the "Bay," at about four o'clock in the morning, both Morella and myself being asleep when the ship arrived in the harbour, but were awakened by a very noisy discussion (in Spanish) taking place on deck.

"I tell you they are not on board," I heard the captain say.

"But they must be," persisted some other voice, "for I have had advice from the British authorities that they would come by your boat."

"I have no such persons on board, I tell you. We have neither a policeman nor a prisoner, and what is more, we haven't any passengers at all bearing those names. Have we, purser?" said the captain, bad temperedly.

"No," exclaimed that functionary in a vicious manner; "they seem to know more about it than we do ourselves."

By this time, Morella and I had dressed, and got up on deck. I then saw that it was a batch of Spanish

police officers in a government dinghy waiting for us, and very soon explained that we were the two individuals they were instructed to meet. We got into the boat and went ashore, amid some farewells, anything but complimentary, from "Mr. Captain," who appeared so decidedly sold and seemed very angry when he discovered who we really were.

I handed the "body" of my prisoner—together with property consisting of about £10,000 in bonds, the remaining balance of some £12,000 worth he had obtained by the forgery, and which I discovered among his belongings at Stoke Newington—over to the authorities. Morella was then unceremoniously pushed into a wretched cell in the dirty, cramped, windowless, desolate-looking building which served the purpose of a prison in the place, and, after obtaining the requisite official receipt, I made my way at once back home to the jetty, where, within six hours, I was taken by another boat to Southampton.

I was rather inclined to feel a little sorry for Morella having to undergo, perhaps, a very long term of imprisonment whilst in just the primest portion of his life. I never heard what his sentence exactly was, although I gathered that it would be a severe one. The little feeling of sympathy I may have had, and perhaps expressed for him, however, was rapidly evaporated when I learned afterwards that, in addition to his crime of forgery, his guilt as regards his reckless work among the Carlists, and his unpardonable conduct towards Felice, he had also, although posing as a "single" man, despicably deserted his wife and two children.

About Felice? Oh, yes! Of course, you will want to know what became of her; and I have not forgotten

her. She, somehow or other, in an almost miraculous manner, managed to shake off the fetters which were binding her to the frightful life she had been perforce compelled to yield to, and when I saw her last it was in one of the large towns in the midlands. She looked as pretty as ever—prettier, in fact, for she was more contented, as she had been able to secure a very satisfactory appointment as travelling and general companion with an elderly lady, who took a great liking to her, and I pity the man who would venture to try on any nonsense with her now.

AMONG THE FENIANS:

AN EPISODE OF THE MANSION HOUSE OUTRAGE.

As I remember James Stephens, the notorious "Head Centre"—and I have every reason to remember him; for did not the Scotland Yard authorities "instruct" me to visit Paris, and whilst there, to carefully watch and note every movement of that audacious individual? which instructions I—as far as I was able—industriously and faithfully carried out—he appeared about fifty years of age, some five feet eight inches in height, slightly built, with a decided and benevolent-looking "stoop," grey hair, and a long, grizzly, straggling sort of beard, careless, if not actually untidy in his dress, but possessing a most intelligent face, full of character and determination; together with two of as lustrous and penetrating eyes as one would wish to see. Anyone, in a single glance, could perceive that he was a man of undoubted power and resolution; his wiry figure, his thin hands, and his restless manner proclaimed it, if nought else did; but, in addition, every line of his prominent features bore evidence to the untoward will power of their owner. The more I saw of Stephens the more did I marvel at his wonderful sagacity and sangfroid.

His personal history and the efforts on behalf of the cause he had so patiently and so persistently championed are too well known to require recapitulation at my hands; suffice it for me to say that James

Stephens stands out almost unique among even the most ardent of the firebrained and so-called "advanced" Irish party.

A man who can absolutely defy the laws and treat the awful "warning" he received on account of his actions directed against the well-being of the country which imprisoned and condemned him to death because of his treasonable practices with the greatest possible contempt is no ordinary mortal, whatever other opinion we may hold of him, his motives, or his operations; but when that person, as it were, just managed by the mere teeth to make good his escape from the noose of the hangman, seeks a place of refuge in some other land, and from there, out-defying defiance, with the greatest possible unconcernedness of the great risks he has already run and the many dangers he has passed, can still plot and re-plot for the destruction of lives and property in the very country he has been compelled so ignominiously to flee from, he proves himself to be daring and intrepid almost beyond measure.

Do not misunderstand me, nor think for one single moment that I am desirous of, in the slightest possible degree, in my apparent admiration of the superior physical indifference and mental control of Stephens, to gloss over or palliate the unquestionable enormity of the offences which have been instigated, and even perpetrated, by individuals of this class, for I have personally the utmost abhorrence—as must have every right-minded person—of nefarious and abominable works of this description, for those who can deliberately and studiously contrive to plan out and give effect to the horrible crimes whereby human life has been, from time to time, so ruthlessly taken,

not only justly earn the utmost loathing and disgust of every law-abiding citizen—whatever his feelings or politics may happen to be—but rightly and properly deserve to be held up to universal execration.

Stephens, after being outlawed from this kingdom, immediately made his way to the United States, there bringing his great powers of organisation into play by the establishment of American branches of the Clan-na-Gael. And very successful he was, both as regards securing men and means. The men—if monsters like them can be allowed the name—were just such as one could only expect a class of that kind to be—a set of characterless vagabonds, prowling about ready and willing to join anybody or anything so long as there were only some lawlessness at the bottom of it, and some pay—scoundrels who formed the off-scourings and dregs of the Bowery, steeped in vice and filth and treason. The means were obtained from subscriptions and subsidies—often given in ignorance of the true nature of the unholy compact who handled and distributed the funds—by respectable and responsible people, who had usually been led away with specious promises and exaggerated reports, vainly imagining all the time that they were affording aid to the, perhaps, legitimate action of self-government or Home Rule, but too ignorant, or too enthusiastic, or too good natured, to enquire; and thus many thousands of pounds became diverted from what was, perhaps, at the worst and at the outset only a harmless political amusement to the propagation of the all-serious, the startling, and the revolutionary regime of Fenianism.

Stephens, although he might be at the time, and he

undoubtedly was, unaware of it, was carefully watched from the very instant he placed his feet upon the soil of the Eagle, his every movement anticipated, his each footstep noted, and from time to time for the whole of the period he remained in America, until he visited France, reports were regularly sent home to the British Government, for there were men (acting on behalf of our country), call them spies if you will, but they are men to whom this country owes a debt of gratitude for the fearlessness and care which they have displayed in carrying out their intricate, and fulfilling their dangerous but important duties, as familiar with the whole proceedings of the American Fenian body as was Stephens himself, which is saying a great deal, and had the Head Centre, by accident or design at any one moment placed his foot upon British land he would have been at once arrested and handed over to the gallows, and the same conditions apply to him now at this very moment should he prove himself sufficiently unwary to venture amongst us again.

When trouble began to thicken in Ireland in 1880, Stephens, who had made very considerable progress with his work in the States, thought that he could, with advantage to himself and his colleagues, be much nearer the scenes of action, and therefore made up his mind to visit France, this position enabling him to confer more easily with his supporters, and permit of an easier and more intimate knowledge of their doings—for dire plans had been planned, and diabolical plots had been plotted, and it was hoped that they would have been carried out to a very much greater extent than they were, for they certainly were intended to prove more disastrous, and they

might have been but for the foresight and quickened intelligence of the English authorities. He left America on a date which Scotland Yard was duly apprised of, bound for Havre, arriving there shortly after by the Messageries Translantique; I, having received particulars of his journey, acting upon instructions, awaiting him.

After staying at Havre for a few hours, Stephens proceeded to Paris, and there for some seven long dreary, anxious months I diligently "shadowed" him, followed him about, took cognisance of all his doings, and, in fact, became, so to speak, his counterpart.

It is hardly necessary for me to describe in detail the whole of his actions during the period of observation mentioned, as nothing of any particular moment occurred beyond what had been fully anticipated by the English authorities—i.e., that he would use his best endeavours to organise his friends and forces in England for the purpose of executing the designs he had in view; but as every item of information as to his workings was promptly sent over by me to Scotland Yard, his followers in London were, as may be truly guessed, pretty sharply looked after, much to their disgust and greatly to Stephens' disappointment, as, owing to the small amount of work got through by them, he, not knowing the actual state of things himself, that the eyes of the Government were fairly wide open, concluded that greater portion of it was being "funked."

However, I may mention that Stephens had not been long in Paris before he became on more or less intimate terms with that peculiar and irrepressible piece of humanity, Henri Rochefort. These two possessing ideas of a revolutionary character in

common, and both being talented, energetic, sanguine, undaunted men, this acquaintance, of course, led to the "Head Centre" being introduced to those turbulent spirits, the leaders of the "Advanced" party in France; also that Stephens' wife was much younger than her peace-disturbing husband, and was a daughter of one who had more or less distinguished himself at one time or the other by the "extremity of his views," and who was, in addition, an ardent supporter of Stephens' mission.

During the earlier portion of the time I was in Paris, it appeared that two members of the Fenian party, no doubt delegates from, and acting under the instructions of, the American gang (for I could not trace in any way their being in direct communication with Stephens), were busily engaged endeavouring to carry out some of their fiendish schemes in London, and these two seemed to have a tolerably free and open course for their infamous operations, as they had managed by their extreme caution, up to the time of which I write, to remain, although looked after fairly closely, perfectly unsuspected by the police of being actually engaged in the work. They had, to allay suspicion, lodgings in different parts of London, working cordially and energetically into each other's hands—in fact, passing current, for they were apparently steady men, and regular in their habits, as two fairly respectable representatives of the artisan class.

One day London, and indeed the whole of the country, was overwhelmed with consternation at the announcement of the dastardly attempt to blow up the Mansion House, an account of which, to refresh the memories of my readers, is here given:—

"About eleven o'clock last night the policeman on duty at the Mansion House discovered a box containing gunpowder lying on one of the ledges in a recess on the east side of the Mansion House building, nearly opposite the end of George Street. Observing that some paper attached to the end of the box was alight, the policeman bravely pulled the box against his breast, thus instantly smothering the fire. A closer examination then disclosed that the box—which is about twenty-eight inches long, by twenty-four inches wide, and five deep, and strongly bound with iron—contained 15 lb. of coarse gunpowder. The gunpowder was lying loosely on the bottom of the box, filling it about one-third full; whilst on the top of it, lay a number of pieces of old newspapers, a canvas bag, and a carpet-bag, both evidently used to carry the powder.

"An ordinary fuse ran from the gunpowder, through a hole in the box, to the outside, and the paper attached to the outer part of the box would, in a second or two, have ignited the fuse and produced an explosion, but for the fortunate arrival and courage of the policeman. No arrests have been made. Several persons were employed at the time in the neighbourhood working on the new electric light apparatus, and many of them would, doubtless, have been injured had the gunpowder exploded.

"The Lord Mayor was not at home at the time, and, indeed, no one was in the part of the building where the box was placed, so that, if it was placed for anyone inside, they would have escaped injury.

"The Lord Mayor thinks it may have been the work of some Fenian or other miscreant, who designed to destroy the building, and, if possible, injure some of its inmates.

"As no one was seen near at the time, the police are not over sanguine of being able to detect the guilty parties."

The Press Association says:—"There was great excitement in the City this morning in consequence of the attempt to blow up the Mansion House with gunpowder.

"At first the statement was discredited, but confirmatory reports were soon circulated and set all doubt at rest. No trace of the perpetrators of the offence has yet been ob-

tained, and so secretly was the attempt made that the officers of justice have little on which to establish a clue.

"That the outrageous design was a determined and deeply meditated one is but too evident from the manner in which the large quantity of gunpowder was prepared.

"It was lightly packed in a box bound with iron hoops, From the size of the box it could not well have been carried at midnight without attracting the attention of the police, and the theory is that it was taken to the Mansion House in a cab. Whether, however, this supposition be correct there are no means of ascertaining. The box was very aptly bestowed if the object was to create the largest amount of damage possible.

"On the east side of the Mansion House is a narrow passage-way, not more than three feet wide, called the Church Walk; and underneath the east window of the Egyptian Hall, in which the Lord Mayor holds his receptions, the box and the ignited materials were found by the police officer. The spot is a very secluded one, and might easily have been overlooked by the constable. It was at great risk to his life that he extinguished the flame, which would shortly have exploded the gunpowder.

"The authorities are at a loss to account for the diabolical attempt.

"The place selected for it is a considerable distance from the police cells, and even had it been nearer them the prisoners are not confined there at night.

"The only supposition which is entertained in official quarters bearing anything like the semblance of probability is that the Lord Mayor, in the House of Commons, has voted with the Government on the Coercion measures for Ireland.

"It is not improbable that his Lordship, who is himself an Irishman, may have given offence to some of his fellow-countrymen, and that to this circumstance may be attributed the dastardly, but happily unsuccessful design.

"The walls underneath the Egyptian Hall are of immense thickness, and although the quantity of gunpowder

was large, it is not likely it would have caused the amount of damage which perhaps the culprits anticipated."

OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE DISCOVERY.

The following is an official report of the discovery:—"The constable on the beat in George Street, last night at about a quarter past eleven, observed a box in a recess of a built-up window on the east side of the Mansion House, facing the end of George Street.

"On close approach to the spot he found enclosed in brown paper a small box. The paper was smouldering.

"This he extinguished, and took the box to the station.

"It was found to contain about 36 or 40 lb. of coarse gunpowder, with a fuse through a hole in the box communicating with the powder. This fuse—that is the upper end of it—was in close proximity with the smouldering brown paper outside the case.

"Had the constable not seen it as he did, no doubt an explosion would have taken place."

ATTEMPT TO BLOW UP THE MANSION HOUSE.

"No arrests have yet been made in connection with the attempt to blow up the Mansion House on Wednesday night.

"The police have, however, obtained a clue to the probable perpetrators, and although not over sanguine, they at the same time do not despair of being able to detect the criminals. It is thought that an arrest may be made in the course of to-day or to-morrow."

Referring to the insinuation that Irishmen were connected with the outrage at the Mansion House, the Dublin "Freeman's Journal" says:—"The idea of any Irishman being guilty of such a crime as trying to blow up the London Mansion House, inhabited as it is by the first Irishman who ever wore the chain of Lord Mayor of London, is a hypothesis which it was a gross insult to Ireland to broach and an insult to her to refute.

"A correspondent informs us that the first person to notice the box was a Mrs. Carr, housekeeper at No. 1, George Street, who brought a policeman from the front of the Mansion House to it, thinking it was stolen pro-

property; she then observed something attached to it which was on fire, which she, and not the officer, extinguished with her foot."

THE ATTEMPT ON THE MANSION HOUSE.

The "Freeman's Journal" says:—"We do not know whether or not we ought to notice a most dastardly insinuation which has been made in certain quarters of England, connecting, without one tittle of evidence, the name of Ireland and Irishmen with this real or imaginary outrage. Imaginary, we say possibly, for after a recent incident in our own city, we would like to hear more of the details of this strange-looking story before we make up our minds as to its genuineness. But let us suppose, for argument's sake, that some madman has really attempted to cause an explosion under the walls of the London Mansion House, we ask again what tittle of evidence there is to justify any man in daring to mention the name of Ireland in connection with such a crime?

"The shell is a favourite weapon with Continental Reds; the powder-can, with a slow match attached, is a great factor in trade union quarrels in Sheffield and elsewhere; but the name of Irishmen has never been connected with such atrocities. The men who blew down the wall at Clerkenwell to rescue their friends inside were guilty of folly in not reflecting on the consequences of such an act in a crowded thoroughfare; but we are sure none were more horrified and astonished than themselves at the dreadful consequences of the act.

"The idea of an Irishman being guilty of such a mad explosion under the walls of the London Mansion House, inhabited as it is by the first Irishman who ever wore the chain of Lord Mayor of London, is a hyphothesis which it was a gross insult to Ireland to broach, and which it would be an insult to her to further refute.

"No arrest has yet been made in connection with the attempt to blow up the Mansion House, but the police still have reason to hope that they will get at the bottom of the crime, which at present seems a mystery. The powder

found in the box was weighed yesterday, and proved to be no less than 40 lb.

"An explosion of so considerable a quantity must have caused very serious injury and damage, and the crime is, to this extent, intensified, and taken out of the category of a harmless freak which has been suggested by some.

"Mrs. Carr, who, as we stated yesterday, first saw the parcel, states also, that she saw a very tall woman, or at any rate someone in woman's clothes, emerge into George Street from the narrow passage leading into Walbrook, look into the recess, and then dart back again.

"The Lord Mayor yesterday received congratulatory telegrams from the Colonies and America, besides many letters; and a large number of the citizens and others wrote their names in the visitors' book during the day.

"Mingled with these communications were anonymous post-cards threatening further mischief.

"In addition to the ordinary policemen patrolling the neighbourhood of the Mansion House, several plain clothes officers are now on duty, and last night, during the conversazione given by the Lord Mayor to the City Mission, they were reinforced by a large staff of constables under the immediate supervision of Major Bowman and Superintendent Foster."

———

"Notwithstanding the enquiries that have been made, and the offer of a reward of £100 for any information that may lead to the detection of the person who placed the box containing gunpowder outside the Mansion House, nothing whatever appears to have transpired down to the present tending in any way to solve the mystery, and from what has been ascertained, and the statements made by the police, there does not appear to be the least chance of the criminal being detected.

"A number of persons connected with the carpentering trade have been to examine the box, but all of them failed to identify it, or to remember having made such an article, and from its general appearance it is believed to have been put together by an unprofessional hand for the purpose of conveying the gunpowder, and that in all probability

the box was made by the person who carried it where it was found. The result of enquiries among the cabmen of the Metropolis has alsc not been attended with any satisfactory result, as no information has been obtained to show that any cabman conveyed a fare with a box like the one in question to the vicinity of the Mansion House on the night of the occurrence.

"The question of increasing the reward is said to be under discussion by the magistrates of the City, but the general impression is that it is not likely to lead to any result, and that the affair is likely to continue and remain a mystery."

The same day, or rather the same night of the discovery, the two above-mentioned men disappeared.

I had myself read with intense amazement the account given above in the London papers sent on to me, and therefore was very much excited on receiving, a little time afterwards, a telegram from Scotland Yard, to the following effect: "Look out for 'Mooney'; the address followed. About five feet eight inches high, fair, light hair and eyes, stoutly built, roughly-dressed Irishman, bricklayer." I had heard a good deal one way and the other of the doings of "Mr. Mooney," and I therefore looked forward with no little interest to making his personal acquaintance, and proceeded at once to set about my task, having made temporary arrangements with the French police regarding the watching of "Stephens."

The two men who had so suddenly and mysteriously departed were no other than Mooney and his co-blackguard, Coleman. How the police discovered this I will briefly explain.

It appears that the righteous wrath and indignation of Londoners being aroused, the authorities, besides offering heavy rewards, as will be remembered, earnestly invited the co-operation of the

public, and lodging-house keepers in particular, in asking them to report any suspicious circumstances which might have come under their cognisance, and giving what details they could. As the result of this appeal, complaints were made to the police by two persons, each remarking upon the sudden departure of their lodgers. Descriptions were given of both men. One was similar in appearance in many ways to the other, but lame, his limp being a very decided one indeed. These descriptions coincided exactly with those sent to Scotland Yard by the Manchester police authorities, who had been fortunately able to get a good knowledge of these men during their stay in that city, but who, although they had been so suspected, had managed keep themselves clear of the reach of the law.

They had been compelled, as matters were getting rather hot for them in Manchester, to make "tracks," and as London appeared to be their destination, Scotland Yard was duly apprised and supplied with the necessary particulars.

An officer was at once despatched to the houses from whence the information had been received, concerning the departure of the two men, and at the second—the lame one's residence—visited was found an address impressed on a blotting pad:—

"Mooney,
" Rue de deux Ecus Halles."

This was a " find " with a vengeance, and Scotland Yard was rightly jubilant, and in consequence despatched to me the telegram just alluded to, and upon which I acted.

In a very short time I satisfied myself that Mooney was staying, under the name of Gourbois, at the

address given, and I soon wired back the result of my search.

Scotland Yard then sent another telegram to me:—

"Keep close watch; officers will come over."

In due course, Chief Superintendent Williamson, Inspectors Littlechild and Meredith, and Sergeant Hancock, of the City Police, together with that cute and enterprising detective, Chief Inspector Caminada, from Manchester, and several others, including a lady, reached Paris.

Mooney and Coleman were undoubtedly the perpetrators of (what might have turned out, but for the timely discovery of the box and the plucky conduct of those engaged in the matter, an extremely disastrous affair) the Mansion House Plot, and they had hurried away (no doubt a carefully planned affair) Coleman via Havre, to America, and Mooney to Paris, where I discovered him.

Owing to the strained diplomatic relationship at that time existing between France and this country, the extradition of these men could not be obtained, for the reason that our authorities had refused, on political grounds, to extradite Felix Pyat, General Cluseret, and others, who, immediately after the Commune, being suspected of implication in the death of the Archbishop of Paris, who was shot down, made, for safety's sake, this country their place of refuge. Mooney and all his villainous tribe knew this very well when making their calculations, and that it would have been illegal to arrest them; therefore, all that could be done was to "identify" Mooney in such a manner that if he ever attempted to set foot in the British Isles again he would do so at his extreme peril.

"Gourbois" had been pointed out to me by the concierge on more than one occasion, and I obtained views of him quite sufficient to warrant my believing him to be really Mooney, but the difficulty arose how to get him into such a position that the whole of the other officials who had come over could do so. We held a consultation, and it was decided that I should disguise myself in some way or other and do the best I could under the circumstances, and at the least make a preliminary reconnoitre.

As extensive building operations were going on in the immediate vicinity of the hotel where Mooney was staying, I concluded that if I took up the role of a French working man and in the morning go up to his bedroom and try to make him understand that he is wanted downstairs by some one, making that some one appear to be Coleman, my experiment might be attended with success.

I obtained with little difficulty a blue blouse suit, a cap, and a pair of sabots, and found myself in a very short time, after smearing my face, covering my clothes with dust, and paying a little attention to some other little details, a very fair representation of a French bricklayer. Speaking the language fluently helped me wonderfully to satisfactorily complete my "get up."

I then went to the hotel, leaving Chief-Constable Williamson and the others ready to hand outside, and explained to the porter that I had a verbal message to deliver to Mons. "Gourbois," therefore would he kindly tell me the number of his room. This he readily did, and I eventually reached the apartment, which was a little place right at the top—in the attics, in fact—of the building.

Knocking at the door, I heard a sharp voice say,

"Who is there?"

"Monsieur, c'est mois!"

"But who is it?"

"Monsieur, monsieur, c'est mois, c'est mois," said I pretending to be unable to speak English. At this I could hear the man unfasten the door, which he did without getting out of bed, the room being so small.

"Well, what the devil do you want?" said Mooney, looking not too well pleased at being disturbed.

"Descendez, monsieur." Here I imitated, as well as I could, what I thought to be Coleman's limp. For a time he did not recognise what I meant, but on my repeating the words and actions several times, aiding them by pointing my finger downwards, he finally grasped the idea I was intending to convey, and said very excitedly,

"Where! where!" concluding that Coleman was really waiting below to see him.

By this time, in his intense excitement, he had sprung out of bed and began to dress himself, and I could hardly restrain laughing right out at the manner he performed his hurried toilet. He put on his trousers and boots (omitting his stockings and shirt), fastened a paper collar and "dicky" combined round his neck, dipped the fingers of his right hand into a bowl containing about a tumbler full of water, rubbed over his face, rapidly passing a pocket handkerchief, in lieu of a towel, across it, and thus completing his ablutions, got into his overcoat, and prepared to accompany me downstairs.

Before he did so, however, he pulled out from under the bed a small black tin box, which he unlocked, and took out one of the most "business-like" looking re-

volvers that I had ever seen, which after carefully examining to see if it was all right, he slipped into his trousers pocket, and, keeping his hand upon it the whole time, proceeded to follow me. I led the way through the hall towards the entrance, when he suddenly drew back, evidently not feeling disposed to go any further. I pointed, however, across the road, as much as to indicate that Coleman was somewhere there, and he then stepped out on to the pavement, when in less than half a moment he was closely surrounded by the whole of the police officers besides the others, witnesses, who at once recognised him as being the same individual whom they knew at Manchester, I meanwhile keeping a sharp eye on his movements in order to see that his hand was not taken from the pocket containing the murderous looking weapon he placed there.

He was too much taken aback, however, to do anything, and staggered and became livid as death, perspiration broke out over his face, and I quite expected to see him fall over in a faint; he managed after a little while, however, to pull himself together, although it was evidently a very hard struggle to do so. Addressing him quietly, but in a firm and decided manner, Mr. Williamson said, "We have come over, Mooney, not for the purpose of taking you back with us, for that we cannot do, as the laws of extradition as they now stand, and as you are perfectly aware, will not permit us, but in order that we should have an opportunity of being able to identify you. You've had a narrow squeak, I can tell you, and I just want to inform you, and you can inform your compatriot, Coleman, to the same effect, that if at any time, near or far, you or he set your feet within British juris-

diction again you will be dealt with as you deserve. We then opened out our little "ring" and the cowardly hound, regaining his liberty, slowly slunk away, and that was the last I saw of him.

Having thus satisfactorily carried out their instructions, the officers prepared to return home, and we thereupon hailed two cabs, and all drove off together to the Gare du Nord. We had walked the little distance from the hotel to the cab-stand, I still retaining my disguise, which had greatly excited the curiosity of two French officials, who narrowly watched our group, as they could not understand a working man of their own country being on such a familiar footing with a rather large party of English gentlemen, when presently some one remarked, "I believe we are being followed by the mouchards."

I ought, in all fairness, to mention that, although the French authorities refused to extradite, they helped us otherwise, be it to their credit, and by the time the Mooney occurrence took place, a large number of Parisian detectives greatly assisted us by keeping their eyes open, on the look out for suspicious characters.

The two mouchards mentioned, evidently regarded us with no little suspicion, and when we got into our cabs they got into one also, apparently with a determination not to lose sight of us.

Whilst in the vehicle, I divested myself of my disguise, having worn it over my ordinary clothes, took off my sabots and cap, replacing them with a pair of low shoes and a soft wideawake, which I had stuffed in the voluminous portions of the blouse, tied all the things up into a bundle, and left them on the seat for the benefit of the driver.

When we reached the station, as we had some forty minutes to wait for the train, our party divided itself up into segments, some seeking refreshments, others newspapers, cigarettes, and so on. The two suspicious mouchards alluded to watched our movements very narrowly and didn't seem to approve of them at all. Presently one of them, a little finical, prancing fellow, with a waxed moustache, came up to Mr. Littlechild, who is in fact a very big child, being over six feet in height, and not at all to be despised in width, and said that he and the remainder of his party must consider themselves under arrest. Mr. Littlechild at first thought it was a joke of some kind or other, but seeing the increased determination of the miniature official, became annoyed, as he did not want to be delayed any longer in Paris than necessary, and felt half-inclined, as he said, to take the man by the ears and lift him out of the way—but he and the others had, nevertheless, to obey the law, and, after a tedious delay, being sent from one cabinet to another, and so on, for about five hours, before he succeeded in thoroughly convincing the "superiors" of the two who had so pertinaciously watched us, that we, upon whom they had wasted so much of their valuable time, really were not Fenians as they had vainly imagined us to be, and that the, to them, dreadful proceeding of my entering the cab as a Frenchman and coming out elsewhere as an Englishman was an action perfectly innocent and perfectly legitimate under the circumstances. We then received any number of most courteous and profound apologies, and all the rest of it, which no one knows better to wield than a Frenchman, and came away. I saw them all off by the train,

and returned to my duty of watching Stephens, which I continued to do for about four months longer. My reports upon his movements were daily becoming less interesting to the home authorities, the "Head Centre" having apparently realised that he had gone, if not to the extreme length of his tether, at least as far as he would be permitted to go, and as his party, owing to the vigilance of the English Government, rapidly became demoralised, although it flickered a little here, spurted a little there, but at last, it, for all practical purposes, became extinguished, the outrage at the Mansion House having undoubtedly signed its death-warrant, I was withdrawn from my long vigil, and ordered back to London.

It was not, however, possible for Stephens, with his fiery energy, to remain completely idle, so he commenced to busy and interest himself in French political matters, with the result that the powers there, in a very short time, seeing the mischief likely to accrue from his baneful influence, compelled him, at a very short notice indeed, to quit their country and leave them in peace.

The latest I heard of him was that he was in Brussels in an anything but enviable position (his former friends having deserted him), eking out a livelihood as best he could by the aid of his natural talents, one of which was an eloquent and descriptive pen.

What Mooney and Coleman are doing now I cannot possibly tell. But I can and do say this, that if it had not been for the crass stupidity of our Government in refusing to accommodate the French authorities in the affair of the Archbishop of Paris, thereby, for a

time, paralysing political extraditionary relations between the two countries, both Stephens and Mooney, and in every probability Coleman, would have paid in full the penalties which their brutal actions so thoroughly entitled them to.

And I feel sure of this, without pretending to moralise upon a subject which I may be told I know nothing at all about, that when the real history of that ill-starred and ill-fated country, Ireland, comes to be written by those capable ones who are above the mere pettinesses of political partisanship, by men whose calmness, independent judgments, and interpretations can be relied upon—when Hibernia shall have attained its peace—a peace which past centuries have denied it—one of the greatest blots upon the pages of such a record will be that called Fenianism, and every inhabitant of that warm-hearted but restless land, from the poor illiterate peasant placidly pulling his potatoes upon the Shannon's bank, up to the most potent of those in position and power—each will endeavour, each will be anxious, to forget the terrors and desolations of former times, and will stretch his hand over the terrible stain, hastening to hide it from the gaze of a later, though it is to be hoped, a more just mankind.

"ON THE HIRE SYSTEM."

"I'M determined to have him prosecuted at whatever cost it may be. What right has he to dispose of property which belongs to me?"

"I don't think I should," I remarked. "What advantage is likely to accrue from it? The young fellow apparently had no evil intention when he parted with the article. Why, good gracious! you have already had twenty-four guineas from him, which, although I do not profess to be a judge, I should think is treble the value of the twopenny-halfpenny musical box which you palmed off on to him, poor chap."

"Why"—this in a tone of increasing anger—"do you mean to say"——!!!

"Yes, I do; and if the man is at all sensible he will refuse to pay you a single sixpence more, or, indeed, take any notice whatsoever of your continued importunities beyond that, if you again disturbed his peace of mind by putting your swindling person en evidence in his house again, he ought to kick you out into the street."

"Why, I'll report you to your superiors, you insolent"——!!!

"Yes; do so, by all means. It is just what I want, for I think you'll then get more than you imagine you bargained for."

This highly-flavoured conversation took place in a

shop one morning in the year '84 in one of the well-known West End thoroughfares—which is almost entirely, that is, one side of it, occupied by dealers in furniture—between a stout, Hebraic, coarse, vulgar man, about fifty years of age, sporting a white waistcoat and a large quantity of jewellery, and—your humble servant.

This man had for a number of years done a very big business, under the name of Johnstone and Company, complete house furnishers, on what is called the "Hire System." He flourished and made money, but a more cunning, rapacious vagabond never oiled his smooth black locks than this unworthy son of Abraham. He advertised freely in the better class papers, and people—silly, unthinking, inexperienced people—rose to the bait like famished fishes. Probably my readers may themselves remember the advertisements. They were rendered something after this fashion:—

SPECIAL NOTICE!

———

A BOON ALIKE TO THE RICH AND POOR.

TO THOSE ABOUT TO FURNISH.

A FIRM of considerable standing, doing a bone-fide business, will FURNISH THROUGHOUT on the HIRE SYSTEM, for Payments arranged to meet the circumstances of clients. No deposits. No enquiry fees. No securities required. Five per cent only added to invoice prices. Pianofortes a speciality. No reasonable application refused.—Address, JOHNSTONE & COMPANY, Edmonton Palace Road, London, W.

Why, this seemed just the very thing for everybody, and those who knew nothing at all about the

matter used to say what a great convenience this "system" must be.

I will try and explain in detail exactly how it worked.

When an application was made to Johnstone and Co., a form was sent by them which required filling up as follows:—

1. Name and address.
2. Occupation.
3. Amount and class of furniture required.
4. How to be repaid, whether weekly, monthly, or quarterly.
5. References.

Accompanying this "proposal" form was a printed list of houses from which goods might be selected if the proposal was accepted, and which certainly contained the names of a few good houses, but the rest were of generally a second-rate and so-so character.

In a few days an official from Johnstone and Co.—generally the Hebraic individual himself—called upon the applicant and also upon the references. He was invariaby civil, and, after making some enquiries, said the "firm would write in a few days."

Presuming that the enquiries were of a satisfactory character, a note to the following effect was then generally written to the applicant:—

"Edmonton Palace Road, W.

"Johnstone & Co.

"Dear Sir,—In reply to your application for £150 worth of furniture, to be supplied to you upon the Hire System, extending over a period of three years, and repayable by monthly instalments, I am directed to say that we should be glad to give you orders upon the firms we transact business

with for goods to the amount of £100, this being the extent of the credit we are warranted in giving on the references supplied. If, however, you could obtain one friend to act as surety, and to be jointly and severally responsible with you for the payments, we should have no objection to let you have goods to the value stated by you; and awaiting your reply,

We are, dear Sir, faithfully yours,
EDWARD J. SMITHSON,
Manager."

This seemed straightforward enough, and the applicant would then generally write and ask for the orders for furniture to the extent of £100, rather than trouble any of his relations or friends upon a somewhat delicate transaction of this description, which he naturally wanted to be kept as private as possible.

The orders for selection would then be duly forwarded, and Mr. Applicant, accompanied by, probably, the future Mrs. Applicant, would, with a light heart and conscience, pay visits to the houses upon whom the orders were made, and if he was not particularly sharp (and people who make use of hire systems very seldom are sharp) he would not notice that the orders had chiefly been made upon the second-rate houses mentioned in the list, or probably upon some not in the list at all. Having selected furniture to the nominal amount of £100, he would go home delighted with his progress, and wait the delivery of the goods, but before these would reach the address he had given, a long printed agreement would be brought to him for signature by one of the firm's officials. This matter would look simple and straightforward enough at the first reading by the official, and would be then perhaps readily signed. A written acknowledgment of the agreement would

be sent, and a first instalment (these are always payable in advance) would then have to be made.

In a few days the furniture would arrive, as cheap a lot of gimcrack stuff as was ever put together, smelling very strongly of bad glue and worse varnish, and looking very different indeed to when it was located in the firm's warehouses (no one can mistake the "Hire System" furniture if it has once been pointed out to them). However, this is an insignificant trifle compared with having three years to pay it in. We will just analyse the exact value of £100 worth nominally according to this wonderful system. The hirer is perhaps struck with the fact that he is supplied with the invoice direct from the firms who have supplied the goods themselves, and not from the hire people, and his faith is thus at the outset increased considerably in the latter by this further evidence of apparent straightforwardness, but he ought not to forget that a duplicate set of invoices have been supplied to the hire people from the same firms with a discount of 33 per cent. taken off (this is an absolute fact, for I have an invoice of the kind which came into my possession some time ago, and have felt very much disposed to exhibit it here word for word and figure for figure), thus the hire people in reality only pay £66 13s. 4d. for what they charge the now deluded hirer £100. On this £100, however, there is the 5 per cent. interest as mentioned in the advertisement; this makes a further sum for three years of £15—then as repayments are always in advance and the interest is added in the first instance, a further 4 per cent. at simple interest only, although compound interest should be calculated, for the use of the repayments, therefore another £12 is, though generally

unsuspectedly, put on, making the £66 13s. 4d. represent at least £127, which, when looked into may be pretty clearly seen to be nearly a cent. per cent. profit; and this is not by any means all, for the furniture is not the absolute property of the purchaser until the last instalment of this exorbitant and abominable charge is paid off. I mean this, suppose for instance the unfortunate misguided hirer has paid off all but the last month's instalment of £3 10s. of his £127, and there is owing to the company that amount, but for some unexplainable reason or other he cannot manage possibly to meet it when due, there is nothing to prevent these land-sharks, for the bulk of them are nothing else, coming in and taking possession of the whole lot; and this, without any notice whatsoever, is done regularly. I grant that the company can only in reality sell out sufficient of the furniture to repay in value the amount of the instalments in arrears, with costs. But we well know what this means, for when prices are realised at knock-out auctions, there is, as we are aware of, precious little left for the poor beggar who has so rashly entered into the clutches of these wretches. Morally and strictly speaking the hirer is the nominal proprietor of £127 worth of furniture, for he has had that amount. Legally it is not his until every single penny of the outrageous lien is cleared off; and what is more, if the hirer in any way places that furniture, which is his and yet not his, under the embargo of a mortgage or a charge of any description whatsoever, he is liable, not merely to a civil action for the recovery, but to a criminal prosecution (if these scoundrels, knowing the feeling of magistrates generally as to their inglorious pro-

ceedings and methods of conducting business, dare institute one) on the grounds of being a fraudulent bailee. Such, roughly and in brief, is an outline of the way the "Hire System" business is conducted, the profits that are made, and the law bearing upon the people who carry it on. My earnest advice to everybody, particularly to those about to start in life, is, have nothing whatever to do with these gentry, for however specious their advertisements—however attractive their "terms"—you are sure to regret it in some way or other if you do. You had far better purchase articles one by one as you require them, and enjoy an easy mind, rather than pay double their value for having them all at once—giving you an intense amount of anxiety until your liability upon them is cleared off.

I am led up to these expressions by the fact that I was deputed to assist Johnstone and Company (at their own request) to try and discover the whereabouts of a pianoforte which one of their customers had parted with unknown to the firm, who were going to prosecute unless he produced the instrument at once, and the conversation heading this story took place after my having discovered where it was located, and having learned the whole circumstances connected with the matter.

It appears that a young fellow (a clerk in a City house), a thoroughly honest, square-dealing man. I knew him well personally, as he was employed by a firm who had in the earlier stage of my career given me some temporary work to do, and I had noted his energy and straightforwardness. He had gone there as a boy, and in sixteen years found himself the head

clerk of the establishment, trusted by his masters, and respected by everybody who came in contact with him. He had saved some little money, and, like many other young men, had entered upon matrimony, his salary being £150 per annum, and had jogged comfortably along for some eight or nine years, his wife having presented him in that period with some half-a-dozen children. This turn of things, of course, taxed his financial resources to the utmost, but, in spite of all difficulties, he kept steadily on, and, being frugal, managed to add to his savings.

He was musically inclined, and one of the dreams of his life, and his wife's, too, was to possess a piano as soon as they felt able to afford it. To take out of their accumulations perhaps forty to fifty pounds for the purchase of one would have reduced their reserved funds too much, so that they wisely determined to wait a little longer. That little longer, however, seemed to have arrived, when the husband one day noticed the advertisement of Johnstone and Company's hire-system in one of the daily papers. He went at once to the establishment, saw a very large stock of pianos marked at various prices, and, running his fingers over several of them, he alighted upon one marked thirty-six guineas, and a very neat, attractive, well-sounding instrument it appeared. He was informed that a guinea per month for three years would purchase it; he, therefore, went home in high glee and told his wife all about it, and she only seemed too pleased with the idea of having a nice piano to fill up a vacant corner of their little sitting-room at their little house at Peckham. John Phillips, for that was the man's name, before he finally decided upon having it, took his wife to see it, and

moreover got a musical friend, who was a teacher at a well-known academy, to accompany them, who, after critically examining it inside as well as outside, looking at and testing the wires, pedals, and so forth, pronounced the tone and finish excellent for the money.

Phillips, having previously satisfied Johnstone and Company with references, signed the agreement, and paid the first instalment. In the course of a week—the hire-system people explained, as a reason for the delay, that the case wanted "touching up" a little before it left the warehouse—the piano arrived, and a rare flutter it caused among the near neighbours, who expressed themselves that these Phillipses must be doing pretty well, for, although they had six children at home, they could manage to get a new "pianny." In fact, the unwashed, gossiping woman who lived opposite, with her dirty arms akimbo, went further than this, and told the people who kept the little greengrocer's shop next door, and with whom she was on very friendly terms, that she felt quite sure it wasn't paid for, as they made such a fuss about it, which was, of course, perfectly true; but, then, as John was the decentest fellow who ever trod shoe-leather, and his pretty little wife, who generally held her dainty little head above every one of her neighbours in the whole street, the hardest of workers, these facts, and not merely the advent of the piano, might, perhaps, have been the true causes of the malicious remarks and suggestions.

After the piano had been in the house a short time, John Phillips thought that its tone did not seem quite so good as it was at first, and remarked this to Johnstone and Company when he paid his next instal-

ment, whereupon that firm remarked, "That perhaps the house or room was a little damp, but they would send a man up to see." The man sent tuned it up, and for a little time matters seemed improved; a second complaint brought the man another time, however, who, after apparently thoroughly overhauling it, said, "Well, Mr. Phillips, this is a piano which I think you will find will improve with keeping, and be none the worse for tuning regularly, say, every month, until it got thoroughly seasoned." Time went on, the instalments being paid punctually; but instead of the instrument becoming better, as anticipated, it, in fact, became much worse, until at last it could easily be classified with hundreds of its fellows which are made for show and sale, and not for wear and use—which it really was. John at last guessed as much, but paid his guinea monthly, bit his lips, and kept his own opinions to himself. That piano proved a curse rather than a blessing before it was done with, for, after two dozen payments had been made, John Phillips was thrown out of employment by a fire which burnt his employers' premises down so thoroughly that the partners considered the ruin so complete that they refrained from rebuilding, and decided to retire from business altogether. Some months from this date passed. All John's savings had been spent, and, beyond this, he had given a bill of sale upon the whole of his little collection of furniture, excepting, of course, the piano, and things looked very black indeed, for work he could not get of any description—had he been anything but a mere honest, hard-working clerk he could have obtained scores of appointments—and, to crown all his troubles, three of his children sickened and died of

scarlet fever, which was raging in the neighbourhood. Here, then, was the exact summary of affairs—savings gone, valuables pawned, bill of sale on furniture, three children dead, no money, no employment, and a still further increase of family threatened. The poor fellow was nearly heart-broken, and in the hope—oh, Hope, how false and vain you are!—that something would surely turn up soon, he obtained, from a firm of advertising money-lenders, the sum of seven pounds ten shillings on the security of Johnstone's piano, which amount barely met the funeral expenses of the three children he had lost, let alone the thirtieth instalment, which was due on the wretched instrument the first of the following month. In vain he tried to get another guinea for this purpose out of the money-lenders; in vain he asked Johnstone and Company to allow the instalment to stand over for a while in the hopes of better times coming. No, neither of these, one may be sure, turned an attentive ear to his pleadings, and, within twenty-four hours after the payment became due, two men with a cart arrived at the little sorrow-stricken home to take away the piano (more than half of which was in reality John's), which had been given as security for the money borrowed. John was thereupon charged with fraud, and remanded (on the application of Johnstone and Company) by the magistrate, in order that the whereabouts of the piano might be discovered, and I was duly instructed to find it, which was not a difficult matter, as Phillips, though refusing to give these harsh and cruel scoundrels any information upon the subject, as he had not really realised the gravity of his offence, at once confided to me, told me in whose possession it

was, and related, as well as the poor broken-down piece of humanity could, the whole of his sad story. His last words as he fell (having fainted, for the poor fellow had not tasted food for three days) into my arms at the police-station, being, "My God! my poor wife!"

I am not, by any means, what people term a "thin-skinned" individual, as I bade adieu to sentiment years ago; in fact, I have seen so much in the criminal line as to render me capable of nearly believing anything, if it is only bad enough, thus making my moral hide almost as tough as a pachyderm; but, I must confess, that when I thought of this poor suffering man, with his sorrow-stricken wife at home, ill and unable to leave her bed, the children crying about the house, temporarily deprived of help and entirely without food, it was just about as much as I could stand, for I had known them all under such different and brighter circumstances, and I determined to see what really could be done.

Taking advantage of the remand which had been obtained, instead of looking after the piano, as I was supposed to do—and this is the only time that I can ever fairly be accused with wilful neglect of duty—I spent every spare moment of ten days in getting at the antecedents and pedigree of Johnstone and Company in general, and the Hebraic "gentleman," who seemed to be at the head of affairs, in particular; and a pretty large list I obtained of sharp practices and doings which they had been guilty of—so much so, that on the eleventh day, three days before the fortnight's remand had expired, I called on the astute firm, as the opening of my story describes, which, with many other remarks, states exactly what took

place at that interview. I had, in the meantime, enlisted the help of a friendly solicitor (Mr. George Kebbel) on the prisoner's behalf. On the morning of the fourteenth day, poor Phillips was placed in the box, but no prosecutor appeared. Then Mr. Kebbel got up in his place, and explained to the magistrate that his client "had a complete answer to the charge" —solicitors invariably say this, it always looks well —whereupon that worthy gentleman peeped over his spectacles at the prisoner for a little while, and, evidently not altogether unfavourably impressed with John's appearance (nobody could possibly be this, for he was a frank, open-hearted, good-looking fellow enough, although haggard and care-worn just then), simply said, "You are discharged, sir."

Then, if a minute or so later, you had only seen the hugging, and the kissing, and the crying, and the laughing which took place in the corridor, outside the court—for Phillip's devoted little wife had managed (and her last baby was then only four days old) somehow or other to be present at what she expected would be the "trial," having quite made up her mind that her husband would at the least be sent to Siberia for the rest of his existence—you would (had you been there to see it) have done just exactly what the great, big, burly, brown-whiskered policeman, who stood at the door, did—for you positively could not have helped it—you would have wiped your moist eyes on your coat sleeves; and, if you had happened to have been a policeman, too, have said, suddenly straightening yourself up, and somewhat startled to find yourself giving vent to your finer feelings, "Now, then, pass along there!"

I will now tell you why there was "no case" against

Phillips. I discovered, during my investigations, that Johnstone and Company, after they had agreed to sell the piano to that unlucky hirer, had, before delivering the article, deliberately taken out the inside "works," and substituted another and much inferior set, reducing its real value to about ten pounds; and, moreover, that this was a practice which they had successfully carried on for many years, thereby defrauding a very large number of people. I supplied this information to Mr. Kebbel, who wrote to them saying that unless they agreed to return the whole of the instalments, together with 5 per cent. for interest on them, fifty pounds as damages, and all costs up to the satisfactory conclusion of matters, he would know precisely what line of defence to take. I need hardly say these requirements, although they were of a stiffish nature, were promptly met; and this explains the non-appearance of the would-be prosecutors.

We had not told Phillips anything about this, and I shall never forget his look of perfectly blank astonishment when Mr. Kebbel and I called upon him, and handed him the fifty pounds, the instalments, and a letter of apology from Johnstone & Co. He fairly sobbed with joy, and his little wife, when she had thoroughly satisfied herself (suspicious mortal she had become), "that nothing else was happening," fairly screamed with delight. Phillips paid off the bill of sale, got back the piano, and found himself with many pounds in hand to commence work afresh—which he was able to do very shortly afterwards, for the magistrate, having heard from Mr. Kebbel the true facts of the case (and this very magistrate is generally credited with being "hard," and has all sorts of "nasty" things said about him by the press, who really know

nothing at all about him), spoke to some friend of his, a paper manufacturer in the country, and John was provided with a berth quite as good in every way as the one he was compelled to give up, and to this day, neither master nor employe have had any cause for complaint. And if any of my readers happen at any time to be in the neighbourhood of ————, no, I won't say where, for some of you would be sure to go simply out of curiosity—but, however, if you do happen to find yourself there, and it is only about forty miles from London, call on Mr. John Phillips at the neat white house (he is manager at the mill now), taking the first turn on the right after you leave the railway station, and if you find either John or his peachy-cheeked wife (she's got all her colour back now, and yet another baby I am told—was there ever such a woman, bless her!) at home, and you mention to them that you are a friend of mine, I'll warrant that you'll get such a welcome that you've never had in your life before, never! But, if you don't mention my name, and you should happen, incautiously or accidentally, or any way, to say anything about "hire systems," well, Heaven help you!

Presuming, however, that you have adopted the former, and, I think, the more agreeable plan, and you have nothing else in particular to do, stay a few hours with them; they will only only be too pleased to have you, and probably Phillips will persuade you to walk over to the neighbouring village about a mile and a-half away. When you get there he will take you to a Mechanics' Institute sort of place, which the mill hands use, and up at the end of the room you will notice (if you've got any eyes at all) on the platform, a rather battered, something-wrong-with-

the-sound kind of musical instrument—a piano, with a small plate affixed to it, bearing the words:—

"Presented by John Phillips and his wife to the ————————" By Jove! I was again nearly telling you where.

* * * * * *

Johnstone and Company still carry on "business," but they have, I am informed, for some time past, ceased dealing in pianos.

A QUEER "CUSS."

I HAVE had a good many curious cases during the course of my detective experiences to deal with; all sorts, in fact, varying from pitch and toss to manslaughter, but perhaps the most curious one of all that ever came within the range of my observation was one which I became engaged in, occurring exactly six years ago.

One midnight in the autumn of 1883, I remember the time so well, because I was busy "shadowing," in Soho, a well-known burglar, a ticket-of-leave man, who, owing to his extremely powerful voice, went among his pals by the nickname of "Thunder," and who had been giving the suburban inhabitants of this metropolis very considerable trouble, for he was a well-tried expert, a far-seeing, experienced individual, who could handle his "jemmy" or floor his man with equal facility. He took no heed of the risks he ran, and no care of the damage he inflicted upon person or upon property. His latest exploit had been an extremely successful one, as he had experienced very little trouble over it, and had managed to secure a good haul of that which burglars most appreciate, i.e., jewellery and plate, and had contrived to get the whole of it into the melting pot, disposing of some of the "swag" when he got "wind" that his nefarious little game was likely to bring him into trouble, for he had left a lantern behind, which,

not to be explained here, gave a sufficient clue to enable the police to get on to his track, and make it rather warm for him. He had been dogged to a house in the part of London wherein I stood that particular autumnal evening, as described above, and had been seen, or rather it was thought he had been seen—or, at all events, a man clearly answering his description had been seen—entering the house which I was engaged in critically observing.

I was just on the eve of being "relieved," having had something like six hours' watch, by my substitute, when, happening to turn round, I perceived, within a few yards, and coming towards me, an object which was peculiarity itself, carrying over its shoulder a large bright green carpet bag, such as are used by voyageurs for soiled linen. As the object came nearer, it resolved itself into a tall, gaunt, carroty-haired individual, with eyes looking up towards the sky, wearing a long, thin, flapping overcoat, a flat, soft, and shabby wide-awake hat, shortish trousers, and a dilapidated pair of boots, and was apparently about thirty years of age, but looked, in reality, owing to its slovenly "get-up," much older. The figure's collar was dirty and frayed; he had no necktie; soap he hadn't seen, I am sure, for some time, and I don't think a friendly razor had crossed his chin for at least a month. Hallo, thought I, what's up now? and I made a move as if to reach the peculiar piece of humanity, coughing to attract his attention, whereupon he lowered his eyes, and, catching sight of me, looked nervous, fidgeted a little, seemed anxious to avoid me, and finally, to my intense surprise, took to his heels as hard as he could.

It was a long street—you would all know it if I

told you—and I could see a considerable distance down it. As I did not appear to follow, the man slackened speed, and got into a walk again. By this time, my substitute had arrived; therefore, telling him what to do, I jumped into a hansom, pointed the stranger out to the driver, and ordered him to follow at a walk or a trot, but not to get nearer to the suspicious personage than about thirty yards, so that I could thoroughly perceive his movements without being observed.

I followed him this way, and, strange to relate, every time he saw anyone who appeared to scrutinise him pretty closely, he again stalked off as fast as his long legs and feet would carry him, until he reached a well-known private hotel, whose respectability is perfectly above suspicion, and is such that I and hundreds of others can vouch for, in Surrey Street, off the Strand. He knocked, this was about one a.m.; the door opened, and in walked bag, and hat, and coat, and everything.

Well, this puzzled me considerably, and I hardly knew what to do under the circumstances. I, however, called a policeman, and told him to keep his eyes upon the place, and if anyone answering the description I gave of the peculiar being left the house he must not fail to follow him. It was no use going to Scotland Yard, therefore I went to Bow Street, and came back accompanied by a "help" to the hotel. There we waited, and watched until about eight o'clock, without catching the sight of my suspect, or, indeed, anybody else leaving the place; and beyond noting that the front door steps were cleaned by a very pretty housemaid, in a very pretty cap, and who was a very long time about the job, because

of a very animated flirtation with a young man who was apparently an assistant in the house next door, and who had come out to take down the one shutter which had protected the narrow window during the night, just, of course, by a strange and peculiar coincidence—oh you young people!—with the commencement of the work of the housemaid. After the steps were finished and the flirtation concluded, by an exchange of compliments which pleased the housemaid, and apparently considerably stimulated the young man, who, in his excitement, put the corner of the shutter through a pane of glass in the door as he was going into the house—after, as I say, these little incidental proceedings had taken place, I ventured into the hotel and enquired for the landlord, who in a few moments came to me, and with a quiet, pleasing salute and smile, evidently anticipating the pleasure of receiving a new customer, asked me what it was he could do for me. I explained to him who I was, and said, "You have a man in the house," giving the best description I could of my "find," "and I am anxious to learn what you know of him?"

"Nothing," said the landlord; "he has been here about ten days. He brought a large and peculiar-looking bag with him, which he seems to have a great affection for, as he will let no one handle it but himself. He pays his bill every morning, which is so strange, merely says that he is not quite sure whether he will be back at night or not, shoulders his property, and apparently counting the clouds, slowly walks away, returning, as he has done for some time past, regularly, about the same hour every night, and with the bag, of course. The name he is known by here is Mr. Van Deitmar. He says he

came from Amsterdam, but has not been there for some time, having travelled, and states that his father, many years ago, when he visited London always stayed at this hotel, and for that reason alone we keep him. He is very quiet, takes no stimulants, and never enters into conversation with anybody. Breakfast, and that a very frugal one, is the only meal he takes in this house. However, he will be down presently, and, if you will wait, you can then interview him for yourself.

At nine to the minute Mr. Van Deitmar came down, just as dirty, just as untidy, just as dilapidated as he looked when I saw him on the night before, carrying the mysterious bag—which he seemed loth to part with even for an instant—with him into the breakfast-room. When he had finished his meal, wich consisted simply of a cup of coffee and some bread and butter, I, who had been engaged at another table partaking also of some food, perceiving that no stranger was in the room, took the opportunity of putting some questions to him after calling in the landlord and my assistant.

"I believe your name is Mr. Van Deitmar," said I.

Again he looked nervous and fidgeted just as he did when I had attracted his attention in Soho.

"Ye-es, what do you want with me?" I could easily detect a foreign accent when he spoke.

I then plainly but politely told him that I was a police officer and not being satisfied with his movements I should require to know something more definite as to who he was and where he lived.

"My name, sir, is Mr. Van Deitmar. I live," said he, rather abruptly and emphatically, "in the Govert Flinckstraat, Amsterdam" giving a number which I

remembered well, as I knew the place to be a corner house facing the Amsteldyke, in that charming city, during a lengthened and exceedingly pleasant stay I had there once. It was a house I always admired, because it seemed even more quaint than the many quaint residences surrounding it. "That will do for the present," I replied, bowing, and wishing him good morning.

I got the authorities to wire to the Amsterdam police, supplying the name given me, together with the best description I could give of the man's appearance and asking them if they knew anything about him.

In a very short time a reply came back.

"Keep careful watch; officer will come over Wanted for murder."

Well, much as I looked for, I didn't expect this, and it was rather a staggerer for me. So for two whole days and nights I occupied myself in "shadowing" this Mr. Van Deitmar. His habits were simple, very; but peculiar exceedingly. He would wander all day about the streets, apparently fully engrossed in himself and his own thoughts, every now and again stopping suddenly, to take a good look up at the sky as though he had a personal interest in it; then, when finding himself noticed, or perhaps accidentally pushed by someone passing, he would drop his eyes, and "cut" off with the rapid, jerky, nervous kangaroo sort of movement, so peculiar to him.

He never seemed to rest, being perpetual motion itself; walk, walk, walking, all the day over. About one o'clock he would make his way to Wardour Street, and at an "eatable" shop there purchase a smoked sausage, and at the baker's, a few doors

further on, secure a roll; then, popping these in the tail pockets of his voluminous coat, he would wend his way to Hyde Park, and there, in the open air, irrespective of the hundreds of people who used to eye him with great curiosity, he would, walking all the time, devour his frugal meal, pausing between the bites to have occasional surveys of the space above him. When his repast was finished he would trot off to a little dirty, common, cheap restaurant, hurriedly drink a cup of coffee, remaining in the place but a little while, standing all the time, and carefully avoiding as much as possible speaking to or looking at anyone. Then he would come out, stand on the door-step for a few moments, having another good look overhead, and again walk off.

One other peculiarity this gentleman possessed was that, when he stopped for the purpose of making his astronomical or whatever other observations they were, he always used to put his hands up the opposite of each of his roomy sleeves, as though he was trying to reach the corresponding elbow, and the effect was most comical, giving quite a finish to one of the most peculiar "appearances" I had ever, in all the course of my experience at home or abroad, met with. For tea, at six o'clock, he repeated the process of the morning, omitting the sausage, however, these forming, with his breakfast, the only meals he partook of in the course of twenty-four hours. Then re-commenced his interminable promenade until eleven o'clock, at which hour he would present himself at the Portland Road Railway Station, obtain his beloved green bag from the left luggage office, where he had left it in the early portion of the day, and hurriedly walk off with it (always via Soho) to his

hotel, where, when I heard the door close upon him, I used to offer up my inaudible orison of thankfulness to the Fates for allowing me the completion of my day's weary tramp. Saw my assistant on guard, and went home to get some rest.

This continued for three days, my suspect himself having had almost a fortnight of it, and looking, so to speak, as though he had not "turned a single hair," and "going well" right through, whilst I began to feel that if something did not turn up pretty quickly I should be just about pumped out and put on the sick list.

A couple of dozen miles or so over the hot, hard pavements of London streets, without any break or rest worth mentioning, was as near as anything approaching hard work that I had ever tried in my life, and I don't feel disposed to undertake such a task again, that is if I can possibly help it.

On the early morning of the fourth day I breathed freely when Inspector Bogaerts from Amsterdam made his appearance, and this gentleman and Inspector Roots and myself paid a visit to Surrey Street about the time we expected to find our strange friend breakfasting. He was there, and so was the green bag, but the moment Bogaerts saw him he said to me, "Why, this is not the man. Van Deitmar, the Van Deitmar we want, and we all know him well, is a short, stout young fellow. Oh, no. I cannot arrest this person."

Well, this was a shock, and no mistake; here I had been "following" this individual for the last four days, walking my legs off, half-starved and all the rest of it, expending my time, money, energies and strength on a man who wasn't after all the man re-

quired; I felt so "sold" and so riled, that if I had not been so fagged and so completely worn out, I do really believe that I could have, for I felt it, taken our Mr. Van Deitmar by the scruff of his neck and have kicked him and his green bag over the embankment at the bottom of the street into the river; but all I could do was to look at Roots, who looked at Bogaerts, who in return smiled at Roots, who then smiled at me, and we all smiled together somehow, two of us sadly. The waiter, who was standing by, at once grasping the situation, burst into a loud guffaw, but was promptly silenced by my assistant with a smart kick. We then all proceeded in silence into another room, and sinking down into chairs, unanimously ejaculated "The devil!" This was not exactly the word we used, but it will do quite well enough for the purpose of precisely expressing what we felt.

After some few remarks had passed wherein I entertained the Dutch Inspector with a brief outline of our "man's" doings, we agreed to try and find out at all events who the peculiar individual really was. So approaching him once more, I said, "We are police officers; we have been watching your movements for some time past and are not at all satisfied with them, and would like you to favour us with an explanation, particularly as your name appears not to be Van Deitmar." At this he started and said as though dazed, "Eh, what—police—Van Deitmar—not satisfied—why, what do you mean?"

"Precisely what I said," remarked I, "and we want a full and true account of who you are, and where you came from."

"Oh," he said, "my name is Van der Linden," a

name which Bogaerts knew at once as that of some good and well-known people in Holland. "I really came from Amsterdam, but that is many years ago."

"Well," said I, "would you oblige us by coming to Scotland Yard with your bag?" I was determined to have a look at the contents of that article somehow or other, if I had been hanged and quartered for it.

"Certainly," said he, though rather uneasily.

We got into a four-wheeler and drove off to the "Yard," where a full description of the man and a note of the two names and addresses he had given were taken. He was then politely asked if he had any objection to open the bag and exhibit what it contained? "Oh, no," he replied, proceeding at once to do so.

I shall never forget the looks of surprise and amusement which expressed themselves on the faces of all the assembled officials when the bag was opened and the things began to be handed out. First came to the surface a night-shirt, the period of its last washing evidently dating some considerable time back, then two day shirts, equally unfamiliar with the use of soap, a Dutch newspaper, and two old copies of the "Pall Mall Gazette"; these were followed by a pair of very much worn carpet slippers, and ditto a pair of boots with the mud all dried on, some more newspapers, three or four dirty collars, and a portion of a figured silk scarf; below these again were found an uncut but stale loaf, flanked by a handless hair-brush, not so clean as it might have been and short of the bulk of its bristles. Another dive into the bag brought up a huge slab of yellow Dutch cheese, ornamented by a dressing comb, minus a good many of its teeth, imbedded in it, and two odd

socks. A final exploration yielded pieces of string, buttons, writing paper, and envelopes, and a host of other things lying about loosely; and at the bottom of all, roughly folded up and tied with a well-worn bootlace, a roll of foreign bonds, payable to self, and representing in value about £9,500; these were at once seized (I began to think after all I had got something for my trouble, if it wasn't murder it would at least be robbery, the other rubbish being replaced in the bag), sealed, and handed over to the care of one of the officials, who informed Mr. Van der Linden, or whatever his name really was, that they would be retained by the authorities until a satisfactory account could be obtained respecting his possession of them, whereupon that gentleman merely stared vacantly, shouldered his bag, and, after having a good look at the sky, to see how it might appear from that neighbourhood, quietly but quickly walked away, followed immediately by an assistant whom I had told off to watch and report upon his further movements.

Bogaerts returned to Holland, and in about a week's time a communication was received from him in which he stated that he had, after very considerable trouble, got at the "pedigree" of this particular and distinguished member of the Van der Linden family, and mentioning that his investigations had satisfied him that the man had, some half-dozen years previously, deserted the Dutch Army (having entered as a private, although possessed of considerable means), and since that time his friends had searched in vain "far and wide" to try and learn his whereabouts. He had been heard of, they said, in all sorts of odd places in all sorts of odd corners,

which was the fact, as he had visited nearly all the important cities in the world, and two years previously his father had died, leaving him some twenty thousand pounds, which remained unclaimed. He could hear nothing against him except his eccentricity, and his going about under an assumed name was only further evidence of it.

The bonds were accordingly returned to our hero, regret expressed that he should have been troubled so much, and the information conveyed to him that his father had recently deceased—this affected him very much—and that he was entitled to a considerable sum of money—which didn't affect him at all—and he was left at the hotel undisturbed, every explanation being given to the landlord, who was highly amused at his strange guest.

A few days afterwards a strangely-worded letter was received at Scotland Yard addressed to Inspector Roots and myself. Enclosed in it was a five-pound note, which the donor forwarded, with his compliments, to us and our families, hoping that we would accept this little gift as a token of his appreciation of our courtesy, &c.

We duly reported (according to the regulations) the "gratuity" we had received, which was disallowed us by the authorities, on the ground that, not having done anything (this expression meaning not having made an arrest), we should not be permitted to retain it, but were to return it to the giver.

"Well, I'm ——," said I. "So am I," responded Roots, as we walked out of the office together.

I shouldn't have cared a single "hang" for the disappointments I had had. First, finding that Van der Linden was not a murderer after all; second, that

the bonds were his own, and that he hadn't stolen them; third, that the paltry gratuity had to be returned—none of these, irritating as they were, would have troubled me much, although I sported a sore heel for some time after, had it not been that my substitute, whom, it will be remembered, I placed on duty in Soho, neglected his work and let "Thunder" entirely slip through his fingers.

Verily, it was a chapter of accidents.

I saw nothing more of the eccentric Van der Linden, who, I concluded, was a little wrong in his head, until about a month ago, when walking down the Strand, I espied him on the opposite side of the road, at the corner of Wellington Street (his hands as usual pushed up his sleeves), and wearing exactly the same clothes, which, when I crossed over to look at them more narrowly, I noticed had become quite green with age. He looked just as dirty, and just as peculiar, but more haggard and much thinner, and was scrutinising the clouds (was there ever such a sky gazer?) in the old ways of half-a-dozen years ago. I touched him on the shoulder, when his eyes met mine, upon which he turned quickly and shuffled away; but not without my being able to notice that the slight palsied gait he exhibited betokened the development of softening of the brain.

He was a queer cuss.

IN THE CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS.

A HUNGARIAN ROMANCE.

READER, have you ever visited, perhaps, some of the loveliest places on the face of the whole of fair Europe, and by these I mean the numerous and altogether charming villages situated in the Eastern Carpathian Mountains? If you have not—and it is quite possible that you haven't, as they are very seldom resorted to by the average globe-trotting Englishman (I am taking the liberty of including you in this class, not knowing you personally, and not having any evidence at hand to the contrary) who, somehow or other, in the rush for giddier and more exciting pleasures, seems entirely to overlook the many indescribable pieces of scenery to be found in the healthful and invigorating climate afforded by that formidable chain of beautiful mountains resting, as it were, on the immediate confines of Hungary, and forming at one and at the same time a natural barrier or protection and a panorama of the most exquisite picturesqueness—then you should go.

If you have, I need hardly go further in my humble endeavour to portray that much neglected part of the world; for your own remembrance of it, its scenery, its primitive people, the fragrance of its pines and the beauties of its beeches will do far more to repicture it upon your memory than if I filled scores and scores of pages in an attempt, unsuccessful at

the best, to remind you of something you can never possibly forget, or which, if you do, you ought to feel ashamed of yourself.

Probably your visit there has been one of pure pleasure, unalloyed with business cares of any description whatsoever; if so, you are to be doubly congratulated, for I know of nothing more enjoyable, nothing more fascinating, than to be permitted to luxuriate in those regions, perfectly untrammelled by the requirements of "society," and perfectly free from all ties—wondering what on earth the poor benighted beings you have left behind in smoking, steaming London can possibly mean by trudging off to still more smoking and steaming seaside and other so-called "resorts," in what they call, poor mortals, in their blindness, their holidays, spending double the money and quite as much time in their feeble efforts to restore their enervated selves, when in three days and for as many sovereigns they can reach a country and a district equalled for its grandeur and its ozone nowhere.

It was my good fortune a few years ago to spend no less than six weeks in that delightful part of the globe, and what added greatly to the intensity of the charm, at somebody else's expense. Had I seen or experienced nothing but the quaintest of the quaint little villages possible with some of the most interesting people imaginable—had I done this and nothing more, I should have been fully rewarded for my trouble and have returned home contented. As it was, however, I not only was transported with my visit, but I was elated with the success of my undertaking, and only regret that the relation of my experiences there must be curtailed to a hum-drum de-

scription of the doings of a certain gentleman, whom I will at once proceed to introduce to you.

His name was Karl Waitzen, and in 1878 he came over to London for the purpose of obtaining employment as a "trimmer" in the fur trade, and he, being a skilful and industrious workman, commanded, as a journeyman good wages. He was a typical Hungarian --yellowish brown skin, medium height, high cheek bones, square-shoulders, and provided with that hirsute ornament so characteristic of his countrymen, a pair of moustachios, each of which was curled at the ends like the capital letter S. He was about thirty-five years of age, frugal, and what might be termed long-headed, and, by his perseverence and attention, was soon raised by his employers, a well-known firm in Cheapside, to the position of foreman of the warehouse and factory. This rapid promotion, one may be sure, was not reached without some expressions of discontent and envy on the part of his shopmates, one in particular of whom held him in special dislike. I merely mention this incident because the dissatisfied workman was of considerable service to me. Waitzen's judgment on anything connected with furs was considered by those whom he came in contact with to be about the best in the trade, and for this reason his employers often consulted him in, or entrusted him with, the "buying." This brought him in contact with "representatives" of other firms, who persuaded him at last to start upon his own account, and, having saved some money and built up a reputation, which procured him no end of business credit, he did well, and for a time was exceedingly prosperous; his success, however, in spite of his long-headedness, begat extravagance, which begat inattention, which begat

all sorts of things, as it invariably does, and matters went completely to the bad; but in some way or other a mysterious, and for him a providential fire, occurred upon his premises. Of course, they were fully insured, and this enabled him to pull himself together and start afresh in a new place. The development of his luxurious habits, however, had unfitted him for solid work, and the result was that but for the assistance of a second mysterious and providential fire (of course the premises were again fully insured) he would have had some difficulty in being able to keep going. A third time he started, on this occasion in a fresh locality, but within eighteen months—as another fire might perhaps have caused a few tiresome and impertinent enquiries to be made, for the patience of even the most long-suffering of our insurance offices does become a little taxed when the same individual has at almost equal dates three consecutive conflagrations—he varied the way of relieving the distress occasioned by his financial difficulties, by placing his affairs and his accounts in the hands of the tender mercies of the High Court of Bankruptcy, with liabilities very considerable and assets absolutely nil, the latter a great mistake for an astute individual of his kind to make.

He attended the first meeting of creditors, but, as some of the questions put to him by various sufferers, bearing reference to the fires, were considered by him to be rather of a searching, though he indignantly called them impudent, character; and one creditor, a large one—nasty people these creditors sometimes, big ones particularly—having ventured to express himself of the unkind opinion that he firmly believed that the whole affair was a "rig," empha-

sising this belief by proposing that all the accounts should at once be placed under a committee for the purpose of making a thorough inspection of the books, and a report thereon, &c., the meeting was adjourned for that purpose. No doubt under the impression that the committee were quite competent to make all the necessary enquiries, and to learn the exact position of affairs without his assistance, Waitzen did not turn up at the next gathering; indeed, he made himself scarce by putting as much distance as he possibly could between himself and the gentlemen who had so kindly offered to undertake the duties of generally looking into things.

With that persistency which so much distinguishes business Englishmen, the committee discovered that Waitzen had managed to quietly put away somewhere during the month preceding the receiving order being granted, the sum of about £2,000, and the creditors, not unnaturally, felt inclined to recover it, if possible. They even went so for as to say that they would cover the cost of any necessary legal proceedings to the extent of £50; and, by-and-by, the solicitor appointed by the committee applied to the Treasury, and succeeded in obtaining a warrant for the arrest of the defaulting debtor on a charge of fraudulent bankruptcy. In due time this instrument was placed in my hands for execution.

Some time had, of course, elapsed between Waitzen's departure and when I set out to track him down, therefore he had the advantage of a very good start—some weeks, if I mistake not. I managed, however, to find out the warehouse he had been first engaged at; and, then, after some little trouble, discovered the particular workman who had the "spite"

against him. From this man I learned that Waitzen was in the habit of receiving, pretty regularly, letters from Hungary, and my informer, with a curiosity not uncommon among men of his stamp, had noticed the post-marks, which were invariably dated from Szegada, which is one of the little villages snugly resting in the centre of the chain of mountains which I mentioned in the opening of the story. A very strange feature in the case was the fact that not a soul could I get hold of who could tell me the whereabouts of Waitzen's lodgings—he was a single man—which occasioned me a great loss of time in a fruitless endeavour to find them.

To communicate with the police authorities at Szegada was, of course, a simple matter, but it produced a report from them to the effect that Waitzen was known in the neighbourhood—in fact, had been there quite recently, and his mother, who was a widow, had some months before his arrival been the recipient of a number of registered letters from England. I therefore started for Hungary, and in four days arrived at the tiny village of Szegada, the home of the mother, armed with my warrant. I obtained the assistance of the local officials, the magistrate—a very amusing, jolly, decent sort of old man, who made me stay at his house during the time I remained in the district—and the police. The police force there consists of one man only, who seemed to fill almost every post of importance necessary for the welfare of the community. He was policeman, coroner's officer, court crier, village clerk, and a whole host of other things too numerous to mention. He came nearer to the prototype of "Pooh-Bah" than any individual I ever met. His uniform

was quite as striking and as varied as his official position. He had on a military cap, and a blue tunic very much worn and faded, finishing up with a pair of tweed trousers of a striking pattern, such as 50s. tweed tourist suits are sometimes made of. He was altogether a unique "character," the magistrate, of course, being quite of secondary importance in any matter wherein this ubiquitous individual was engaged.

With the joint aid of these two I at length managed to learn that Waitzen had gone to Buda Pesth. I immediately went there, but returned to Szegada without having found him, as he had evidently gathered that he was being anxiously looked for, and was cautiously keeping out of reach.

When the magistrate and his officer learned that I had not been successful, they adopted a plan which to me was both original and amusing. They immediately arrested Waitzen's mother and brother-in-law, on the grounds that they had both received registered letters from him when he was in England, and until they explained what they contained, they would be confined in prison. This had a beneficial effect, not, however, in the way anticipated, by compelling the two to confess everything, but in bringing Waitzen on the scene again, who, not having heard for at least a fortnight (of course, owing to their confinement in jail), from his mother and his brother-in-law, thought that something must be the matter, visited the village, and was thereupon easily arrested. Then I found myself in a rather awkward position. I could not extradite my prisoner for the reason that the extradition laws do not apply when a wrong-doer reaches his own soil. Had I managed to

secure Waitzen anywhere but in Hungary, I could have had him extradited; being in his own country the law in this respect was powerless to assist me.

However, we got out of this difficulty by, at the judge's suggestion, sending over for the accountant, who had gone into Waitzen's affairs with the committee, and the books. This gave me the opportunity of proving the charge against him in Szegada, which was quite sufficient to serve the ends of justice according to the authorities there.

I was very much astounded at the extremely prompt manner in which the magistrate dealt with the case. The three prisoners were put into the dock, and, without calling upon a single witness for either side, having satisfied (himself by a look into the books) he pronounced a sentence of two years' imprisonment, upon Waitzen, and fined the relatives heavily, on the ground of their being conspirators with the intent to defeat justice. I secured £1,700, moneys found in the possession of the mother and brother-in-law, and bidding the magistrate good-bye, and thanking him for the very pleasant time I had experienced, within two months from the time of starting I was back in London, to the huge delight of the creditors, who were not a little surprised to recover the large amount, and who very kindly voted me a douceur of thirty pounds.

A "LONG FIRM."

Up a rickety set of stairs, through a doorway exactly opposite an open cellar, wherein the business of a wine merchant, where, I believe, as good a bottle of rich old tawny port could have been got as anywhere in London, was, and is, I believe, still carried on—up these stairs, and right at the top of the building, an attic, in fact, there might have been seen (Crown Court, Threadneedle Street, City, I am meaning) painted up on the door-check, "The Central Commercial and Consolidated Banking Company." This was many years ago; of course, there is no trace whatsoever now of the existence of such an institution, the agent of the landlord of the premises having, to his credit be it said, when he discovered the said designation, promptly painted it out, with the remark, that "he didn't think that this concern were a genuine one," and he was quite right.

The room had been taken, and a quarter's rent, £6, paid in advance, by a sharp, business sort of man of about thirty-five, who gave his name as Whitestone; he furnished it with, all told, about thirty-eight shillings'-worth of furniture, and merely used it for the purpose of receiving and answering what seemed to be a fairly large correspondence, visiting the place some three or four times a week.

In the High Street, Borough, in pretty much the same class of office, similarly situated and similarly furnished, and similarly made use of, might have

been noted Baird and Co., commission agents, where another man—only much older, about sixty—transacted also the business of receiving and replying to letters.

At Clifford's Inn, in the Strand, a third office bearing the name of Rogers, Dawson, and Smith, financiers, also might have been observed; this was under the management or supervision of a smart, spruce, dapper, horsey young man, who affected sporting slang, and fancied he knew, and he really did, a thing or two.

In Charterhouse Street, close to Smithfield Market, a respectable-looking, well-equipped office, containing several clerks, who were generally kept pretty busy, running messages, despatching circulars, and so forth, blossomed "Davis and Arnold, produce brokers, and at Lisbon and New York." This was under the charge of a well-dressed, portly, middle-aged, and loquacious gentleman, whose clean-shaven face and irreproachable voluminous white necktie quite inspired those with whom he came in contact on matters of business or otherwise.

Last, but not by any means the least in importance, was a large well-stocked provision and general sort of stores in the busiest part of that busiest of thoroughfares, Stoke Newington, under the title of Gare, Son, and Co., and a very extensive (cash) business they did, the establishment being thronged from opening to closing time. This establishment was in charge of a mild-mannered, sandy-bearded young man of some push and energy, and his wife, to whom he had only recently been married. The bargains that were offered to the public at this place were positively astounding; provisions generally were

sold at an almost unheard of and absurdly low price, and bacon and eggs in particular were marked at prices that temporarily paralysed the opposition dealers, and, had they been cognisant of them, would have put Whiteley's, Shoolbred's, and various others completely to the blush.

"Dang it all," said the nearest opponent, tightening his apron, and freely digging his knife into the cutting board, "to see them going on sellin' their prime Wiltshire at three'a'pence a pound less than I can buy the live pigs at. No two people can stand that long, I know;" and he was correct, for in due time, a very short one, too, came the "bust." Then up went the shutters, to the intense delight of the local tradesmen; and then everybody learned, for the first time, that the Central Commercial and Consolidated Banking Company, of Crown Court; Messrs. Baird and Company, of High Street, Borough; Rogers, Dawson, and Smith, of Clifford's Inn; Davis and Arnold, of Charterhouse Street; and Gare, Son, and Company, of the premises just described, were all in some way or other connected; and, to put it mildly, were about as compact and clever a set of plundering rascals as ever worked, or tried to work, their little games in this metropolis.

Their modus operandi was thoroughly well thought out, and they certainly deserved considerable credit for the ingenuity they had displayed in their calculations.

Commencing with only about £200 capital, the bulk of it being provided by the smooth-faced gentleman at the Charterhouse Street office, after they had established their numerous branches, they carried out as elaborate and deliberate a scheme of fraud as

was ever perpetrated, on pretty much the following lines:—

Messrs. Davis and Arnold would send from time to time to a large number of respectable provincial and foreign merchants and manufacturers (they carefully avoided London) requesting samples and prices of goods of nearly every description for their customers, which, of course, were promptly sent and quoted. After a few days, perhaps, haggling about prices, so as not to give rise to suspicion by undue haste, they would despatch orders, asking that the goods might be delivered at certain wharves, stations, or in some cases, if the articles were suitable, at the Stoke Newington depot, where they were easily disposed of on account of their low price. Sometimes cash in London was asked for, and if the amount was not too large, say not over £20 or £30, a cheque would be forwarded, which of course was duly honoured, and thus confidence created, at other times references would be required. Well, then they always had at least three ready and willing to vouch for their respectability, uprightness, integrity, and so forth. These generally were given by Rogers, Dawson, and Smith, Baird and Company, and the Central, Etcetera, Banking Company. The poor provincial and foreign Simple Simons of manufacturers and merchants, instead of floating independent enquiries, were invariably eager to despatch their goods when such a firm were so favourably vouched for. The stationery used by these rogues was generally of a first-rate quality, the addresses were fairly good ones, the letters business-like, and the note-paper was always headed with the names of their bankers in Crown Court. Well, what more could be expected,

particularly when Lisbon and New York also had so conspicuous place in their circulars, lists, &c. If the order was an unusually large one a "bill" at a short date, drawn by the Charterhouse people and accepted by the convenient "bank," generally gave satisfaction to the victims, who, perhaps, congratulated themselves upon having done a good stroke of business.

In this way, in something short of twelve months, this gang managed to get hold of and dispose of nearly £18,000 worth of goods of all possible descriptions, embracing everything from pickaxes to pianos, which were either immediately pawned or at once disposed of by auction, or otherwise promptly realised; but provisions were their forte, as they were easily obtained, chiefly from abroad, and of course, as easily disposed of, considering they were being retailed at their Stoke Newington house at about forty per cent. less first cost than anybody else could possibly purchase them.

An enterprising Dutchman, living at Edam, was the first to make a move, as he had sent over to the firm some six tons of his native cheese, receiving in payment two bills duly accepted by the "bank" and of course utterly worthless. He felt very sore about this and paid a visit to London in person, in order that he might see what was going on among his new customers. He discovered nothing but closed offices and staring sign plates at the two addresses in Charterhouse Street and Crown Court, so, quietly putting his hands in his capacious pockets, he puffed sententiously at the large, cheap cigar he was smoking, and remarked, in his own peculiar phlegmatic manner, "dam rogues." He then paid a visit to

Scotland Yard, and sought the assistance of the authorities there, which, of course, was readily granted.

After some considerable skirmishing about London and the provinces, I managed to secure no less than three members of this precious firm, and duly had them lodged in gaol under a remand. They were the horsey young man from Clifford Inn, whom I arrested, much to his disgust, at a local steeplechase meeting in Buckinghamshire; the "Banker," whom I picked up at the Alhambra one night quite unexpectedly, and the High Street, Borough, gentleman I got hold of by waiting and watching for him outside his own office. He was rather slow in his movements, and, Scotchman-like, went back to the place a few days after his departure for some little article or other he had left behind him in his hurry to get away. His extreme "carefulness" thus led him into my hands. The portly, saponaceous individual got away to a village in Cambridge, and remained there undisturbed for some three months or so, when I managed to get wind of him, he having just started in the place "The Guardian Building and Provident Society," on entirely new principles (his own, I suppose), and which promised great success (for him), the idea being taken up heartily by the local people. He was intensely indignant when I presented my warrant, and insisted on his leaving at once the board meeting, which was being held at the chief hotel in the place, and accompanying me to London, and in a very copious flow of language threatened to have all sorts of things done to me for my unheard-of and unwarrantable intrusion, and so forth. However, he had to come, much (as I explained) that I

regretted having to disturb the apparent harmony of the proceedings.

The young, sandy-bearded man, representing Gare, Sons, and Co., had not attempted to run away, thinking he had a good answer to the charge, so that no difficulty occurred in getting hold of him.

In due time they were all charged and remanded, bail being refused, wit hthe exception of Gare, Sons, and Company's young man, who was allowed out under a surety of £500, which, however, he estreated by cutting off to America, where, although we knew his address, we had no power of extradition for cases of this description, leaving his wife still at Stoke Newington. The quartette were sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from eighteen months for the horsey man to five years for the smooth-faced, elderly individual whom I secured in Cambridge, and who had a pedigree of sufficiently criminal character to strike envy into the heart of the most hardened reprobate. He had been a local preacher in his time, and owing to his suavity and 'cuteness had managed, with the exception of a trifling sentence of three months or so, to keep out of the reach of the police.

Thus the country was relieved of the presence, for a time, at all events, of a set of scamps, who thoroughly deserved all they got, if not more.

But my story does not end yet, for some few weeks afterwards I received a communication from Dartmoor Prison, whence my portly friend had been removed, stating that if I would pay him a visit he could give me information which would lead up to the arrest of the individual whose recognisances had been estreated; so, after obtaining the usual permission of the Yard authorities, the Home Office

granted me the usual permit to visit him. I went to Dartmoor, where I found him looking not a bit the worse for his incarceration, just as oily and just as smooth as of old, making due allowance of course for the alteration in his appearance caused by the prison's scant toilet arrangements, and peculiar characteristic clothing.

"Well, No. 24,683½," said I, "what do you want with me?"

"Oh!" he said, "I can get Gare back to England if you will only let me have pen and ink and some plain note paper."

These were at once secured, and he wrote a letter, the contents of which were as follows:—

"MY DEAR GARE,

"You will be glad to learn that I am free, the police not having been able to rake up sufficient evidence to secure my committal. Now, as there is a large quantity of the 'swag' left untouched, and, lying to my order at Liverpool Street Station, I think we might with advantage realise it, then clear out and set up 'business' somewhere in the States.

"Believe me,

"Yours ever,

"J. DAVIS."

The address was given at a stationer's shop close to Regent Street.

The bait took and the unsuspecting Gare came over at once and walked into the trap set for him. I arrested him, and he underwent his sentence like the rest.

Davis's object in "peaching" upon his pals was, no doubt, with a view of getting his own sentence lightened, a plan usually adopted by scamps of this

kind who stick at nothing if they think their own purpose can be served. However, in this particular case, I am glad to say, the Home Office turned a deaf ear to his request when he detailed the services he had rendered by assisting to bring Gare to justice, because the man had such an unpleasant history, having been concerned in so many frauds, that the authorities considered that his punishment as it was barely met the retribution demanded by his misdeeds.

Men like these are perfectly incorrigible; a few years' imprisonment makes very little difference to them, and it would not surprise me in the least to find the "firm," either here in this country, or abroad somewhere, again carrying on their little games.

"CHEQUE-MATED."

THERE is one matter, the importance of which, to my mind, cannot possibly be over-estimated, affecting very greatly the financial well-being and morality of the whole commercial world, and which requires prompt and vigorous attention at the hands of our legislators, and that is the law—or, rather, want of law—regulating payments by cheque. In a word, I mean this—that, as matters now stand, there is every inducement offered to swindlers and wrong-doers to take advantage of unthinking or too trustful people, by palming off for their acceptance "phantom" or worthless cheques.

I may be met with the suggestion that cheques are, in reality, notes of promise, and that any interference on behalf of the authorities in the way that I would wish and suggest would prove hurtful to business and commerce generally.

I anticipate this by saying that, by usage, or custom, or whatever we may be pleased to term it, a cheque has become recognised, or ought to become recognised, as an order for payment, and not as a note promising payment at some time or other.

The former is just as simple as if a man wrote a note authorising his wife to pay to the bearer so

many sovereigns out of, perhaps, the black tin box in the corner of the bedroom at home, and does not, in any way, come under the category many people would have it, or like to have it, to do.

The latter is a different thing altogether; for it is only what it is—a promise, and nothing more, and the one accepting it does so on the full understanding that it may, or may not, be kept when maturity arrives.

I would make it a criminal act if any man issued a cheque for any amount whatever unless he had, at the time of drawing the cheque, sufficient at his bankers to meet it, or such an arrangement with his banker that it would be met. By this simple, and, I should say, easily accomplished measure, an effectual stop would at once be put to the many thousands of cases of imposition and fraud which yearly occur. Business would be greatly facilitated, and the bogus people and the bogus banking accounts would swiftly be swept away to the advantage of everybody of probity and genuine disposition.

I throw out this suggestion because I have met with so many instances of carefully-thought and carried-out schemes, large and small, originated for the sole purpose of imposing upon the good nature or the laxity, maybe, of the victims; whereas, had such a law as I propose been in existence, it would have been utterly impossible (as your "phantom" cheque-drawer would hesitate considerably before knowingly placing himself within the reach of the criminal law) for anyone to have brought their machinations and operations to a successful issue.

What is to prevent, and what does prevent—for is it not carried on daily in our midst?—a number of

evil-minded persons opening an account at some bank or other, and so manipulating matters that they can, in a very short time, get rid of, for value, a large number of utterly worthless orders to pay that, which does not, nor never did, exist; and, unless the sufferer can prove that a conspiracy to defraud—a very difficult thing at the best of times—has taken place, he may whistle in vain for his money or for proper retribution.

If I, or anybody else, taking advantage of a man's carelessness in not properly buttoning up his pocket, abstract therefrom, say, a ten-pound note, and either of us are unfortunate enough to be seized by the police, we should suffer a severe and thoroughly deserved punishment, although, perhaps, the worthy magistrate might garnish the sentence with the suggestion that the victim should, in the future, be careful and not go abroad in the streets with his pockets insecurely fastened, and so on. But, on the other hand, should I, or any body else, draw a cheque for the same amount upon a bank where I know perfectly well I have not as many shillings to my credit, and prevail upon some unsuspecting individual to cash it, or let me have goods, or goods and change—the latter so often done—to its amount, I, or anybody else, doing this—as deliberate a form of swindle as could possibly be conceived, a much worse offence than the first—can stand by and laugh at the consequences, which are nil, and the same magistrate will, perhaps, when applied to for advice on the matter, say to the applicant that he ought not to have been such a fool.

I picture this anomaly in the hope that it may attract the serious attention of some of our enter-

prising law-makers, who may, perhaps, feel sufficient interest in the defect as to attempt its remedy. And now to my story.

About ten years ago a considerable sensation was caused in London by the discovery of a gang consisting of four men, Mardel, Hughes, Carden, and Brown, who had, by the means of some very clever manipulations, succeeding in passing a large number of "phantom" cheques chiefly upon unsuspecting suburban tradesmen. In all they had managed to secure a very considerable amount of cash—some three thousand pounds, I believe—although they had been sufficiently wideawake to draw each cheque for a small amount, as in no case could it be discovered that they had paid away any exceeding in nominal value ten pounds. Their reasons for this was that the smallness of the amount prevented to a very great extent the sufferers from taking any proceedings by law, preferring as they did to pocket their losses and to exercise more care in the future rather than be put to the trouble—for it is a trouble, a great trouble, to busy men—of having to appear at a prosecution, and perhaps losing time quite equal in value to the amount they had been defrauded of.

At last, however, retribution reached these wrongdoers, and, after a tediously protracted trial, they were each sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, thereupon it was hoped by the authorities, no less than by the public, that, at all events for a time, a stop had been put upon their dishonest proceedings, but to the intense surprise of everyone concerned, the "phantom" cheques still continued to be negotiated, and were brought, with complaints to the authorities, in fairly large numbers, bearing the signature

(there was no question about this) of one or the other of those who had just been committed. It was very evident, then, that someone outside the secured members of the gang was still trading in them, and apparently with success, and the conclusion being arrived at that the four fraudulent persons who were now paying the penalty of their misdeeds must have left behind them unnegotiated a large number of cheques drawn and signed by them before they were seized; and the individual with whom they were entrusted, whoever he might be, now dealing in them, was perhaps not aware that his companions had been overreached. Under the directions of Mr. Chief Superintendent Williamson, I searched high and low, everywhere, excepting, of course, in the right place, to discover the guilty party, but in vain; all the information I could gather from the unfortunate people who had accepted the cheques being "that an elderly, respectable-looking gentleman had brought them to be cashed." This wasn't much, as so many elderly, respectable-looking gentlemen nowadays do things they ought not to do, and I was compelled to let my investigations cease, at all events for a while, giving the case the usual "rest," and some weeks thus passed by. One day, shortly afterwards, an inspector of one of the south-eastern suburban stations sent up to the "Yard" a returned cheque marked "no effects" which had only been cashed a few days before, with a report stating that the tradesman who had cashed it knew the individual who had brought it to him, who, on finding it returned through the bank, had gone to the man's house to see him, but had never been able to secure an interview, being put off with various kinds of excuses,

"not at home," "out of town," "uncertain when back," and so on, and, not altogether appreciating this kind of treatment, placed the matter in the hands of the local police, who in turn reported it as mentioned.

I went over and saw the police officials and the tradesman, who was a grocer with a fairly good middle-class sort of trade. "Oh, yes, sir," he replied to my queries. "I know the man very well; he's done business with me for the last ten years. He never was what you may call a good payer, and owes me now a balance of four pounds for goods, besides the six pounds ten shillings he had from me on the cheque, and he lives not far from my shop, about fifteen minutes' walk, not more."

"Do you know what he does at all in the way of earning his living?"

"I believe he is engaged in some office or other in the City. At all events, he goes up to Ludgate Hill every day, because I have travelled with him on more than one occasion."

Armed with this information I made further enquiries, discovering that my suspect was a solicitor's clerk; more than this, his employer was actually the solicitor entrusted with the defence of one of the gang just mentioned. The suspected man's name was Locker, he was about seventy, and had been in one situation a considerable number of years, greatly trusted and esteemed at the office, being looked upon as a hard-working, painstaking servant, but, possessing a somewhat indifferent education, he had not been able to make much headway in the legal world, and, in consequence, occupied much the same position in the office that he had done nearly a quarter of a

century before. He had a small salary and a large family, two conditions which in the disposition of our social economics seem, somehow, to be almost indispensable. A rather extravagent wife, who had, however, recently died (he had married a second time), seven grown up flippant daughters, and four somewhat useless sons, had been and were a very considerable drain upon the old man's resources, and it was just as much as he could do to keep his house together.

Mardel, the chief spirit in the band of imprisoned conspirators who had made use of Locker's master's services in his defence, was brought into frequent contact with Locker, and so impressed this latter gentleman with his sharpness that the deluded old donkey very readily entered into the scheme which Mardel propounded, and which had every prospect of a profitable issue if properly and effectively carried out.

The plan of working was a simple one. Locker was to be supplied with a liberal supply of blank cheques drawn by Mardel or one or the other of his three co-conspirators, negotiate them wherever he could, and pocket for his share a fifth of the proceeds. The old man was sufficiently weak and quite impecunious enough to readily fall in with the "speculation," and, at an age when everybody else would be thinking that their work was finished, his (of a kind) was, so to speak, just commencing. His having a very venerable appearance and a rather pleasant manner, he got rid of a large number of these utterly worthless cheques (which being made payable to himself, and which he always endorsed) in different parts of the city, generally in payment of goods, receiving

the balance in cash in many instances, or purely and simply for cash alone.

When the angry victims discovered their loss they in several instances wrote very threatening letters. To these Locker replied, saying "that he was sorry the cheque had been returned, and as he himself had accepted it in payment, he supposed he would have to suffer the two losses;" generally a pitiful sort of an epistle in which he gave expression to the deplorable state of his finances, he would pay when he could and so forth; and the deluded ones, tired of making application after application, rather than be bothered any longer, invariably preferred to let the matter drop.

His employer got to hear soon about the transactions, and thereupon cleared the unfortunate individual out of his office in a very peremptory manner indeed, and the poor foolish old man was put in a worse position than ever he was, for, entirely ignorant of the salutary punishment meted out to the delinquents whose labours he had shared, and being so pushed for money himself, he made the great mistake of negotiating one of the cheques, the one in fact placed in my hands, in his own neighbourhood, which led to the authorities' interference. But for this unwise transaction, Locker might have remained unsuspected, unless perhaps one of the conspirators might "split," which was as likely as not, for the members of this class of individuals, as a rule, have not the slightest possible respect for each other when their own difficulties are made apparent by some timely effort or other on the part of the police.

I made a further discovery—this being that Locker

only the day after he obtained the cash for the cheque accepted by the local tradesman had his attention for the first time drawn to the arrest and sentences upon the other four transgressors by one of his daughters, who had got hold of a copy of a daily paper quite a month old, giving a full account of the proceedings, which she read at the tea-table to the old man, who then became visibly agitated, and from that time thought it advisable to secrete himself from public view, which he did, confidentially informing his daughter that he was implicated in the affair and must keep quiet. I got all this information by a very roundabout and searching process. It was very disconnected at first, but I managed to string the whys and the wherefores together, and thus made up a very strong and suspicious case against Locker. Besides this I felt tolerably certain that he was hiding in or about his own house, several little circumstances which occurred convincing me of this, most notably the first fact that for quite a week no letters were received or posted from the house; and the second that when I called at the place in different disguises upon various excuses, there was always a great commotion in the passage before the front door was opened, as though someone was hurrying out of one or the other of the rooms.

At one time I went as a pedlar in a very seedy suit of clothes and "make-up." I knocked at the door, and, after the usual delay in opening, one of the daughters presented herself and cautiously said:—

"What do you want?"

"Do you want to buy any penholders?" (having a few in my hand).

"No."

"Are you sure?"

"Quite."

"Is the master in.

"No, he went away some time ago" (this very emphatically).

"Are you certain?"

"Yes."

"When will he be back?"

"Don't know—why?"

"Because he always used to buy penholders from me to take to his City office."

This suggestion startled her a little I could see.

"But perhaps you could tell me where a Mr. Higson, the grocer, lives, as I am told he is a kind man and might buy some of my penholders?"

"Oh, yes, he—that is to say" (this very confusedly) "he has the third grocer's shop on this side up the street, towards the station."

"Thank you, miss."

By means such as the above, and by watching their effects on the girl who answered the door, as I said, I became thoroughly sure that Locker was, if not in the house, at least somewhere close at hand.

Yet to make myself more positive about the matter, I called with Inspector Marshall one night about seven o'clock, and said that we were old friends of Mr. Locker's, and had called as we were just passing to spend a few hours with him, and asked if he was in, whereupon we were told the stereotyped tale "that he was out of town," and would not be back for some time. By a strange coincidence it was my "luck" to have to deal on each occasion with a fresh daughter, which seemed to have a very amusing

effect, as I had called five times previously and had noted a "new" face every time, and as this made the sixth visit, and still another appearance, I began to think that it must have at one time rained daughters in that neighbourhood. The comical side, however, of the case proved useful, for I perceived that each one had been very carefully "coached" what to say when enquiries were made respecting "father."

The impressions made upon us were quite sufficient to warrant our again visiting the house at a later hour; therefore, we placed a plain-clothes constable to watch during our absence, and returned about half-past nine. It was a cold, bitter, penetrating, January night. It was snowing heavily, and the street, consisting chiefly of small houses, looked quite light in consequence.

We planned out our work in the following manner. Marshall was to station himself in such a position that he could readily obtain a good view of the front door, whilst I went round to the back, which I accomplished by getting through the window of a neighbouring empty house, and carefully piloted my way to a part where I could command a good sight of the rear of the premises. I accomplished this by laying myself out flat on a convenient low wall, and in a very few moments was completely covered by the falling snow, which gave me an excellent opportunity of watching without being perceived by anyone. I could easily see into the kitchen of Lockyer's house, where I noticed his daughters busily engaged in preparing supper, but could see nothing whatever of the man himself.

In about an hour or so I heard a tremendous rat-a-tat on the front door, which I knew to be given by

Marshall, and in less time than I can say it, there was a tremendous hubbub and confusion among the daughters, followed by a long pause before any of them ventured to answer it, the reason of the delay being that it gave the old man an opportunity of making his appearance, hastily running out of the kitchen (into which on hearing the knocking at the front door he had entered), bare headed into the yard, closing the back door hastily and putting his ear to the chink, to listen who the visitor was, when, not being at all reassured by the voice he heard, he hurriedly rushed into a small shed, a kind of wood-house, and endeavoured to hide himself. At this I got down off the wall, and, walking carefully, managed to approach the outhouse unawares to Locker, and speaking quietly to him, said, "You had better come out, Mr. Locker, it is only wasting time to try and get away." To this remark I got no reply, so I whistled for Marshall, who came into the yard, and together we managed to drag the poor old man, who had fainted, out into the open, succeeded in getting him "round" with a little trouble, after which we took him into the house to enable him to get his overcoat and muffler before accompanying us to the station.

It was a very sorrowful spectacle indeed, as you may be sure, the daughters were all crying, gesticulating, and imploring us not to take him away. In the midst of it all the old man seemed quite dazed and unable to speak, although I had let him have a pretty good pull out of a spirit flask I had with me, he had just a few mouthfuls of the hot supper and that was all, and without saying a word he followed us into the passage, when the scene became even

more distressing. The girls clung to him, and to Marshall and myself, and implored us to let their father go. We were quite an hour there before we could get him out into the street, and even then all the daughters followed us, without head-dresses or shawls, the snow still falling, increasing, rather than diminishing the whole time during our mournful and uninspiriting journey to the station-house in Rochester Row, Westminster, something like five miles, not a cab or conveyance to be had, and beseeching us the whole time not to take him away. It was more like a funeral procession than anything else, and I was not sorry when we got him into "quarters," which we did just as Big Ben struck midnight, the station door then closed upon us, and the daughters weepingly went home.

Locker, although he had negotiated upwards of sixty of the "phantom" cheques, was, on account of his age and previous good character, sentenced only to nine months' imprisonment, and that without hard labour. He, however, died in gaol.

A PECULATING "SAMSON."

SOME half-dozen years ago there might have been seen an itinerant troupe of entertainers giving their performances and exhibiting their powers in a tent erected on a piece of waste ground situate in the outskirts of Brussels. It was a motley, ill-favoured group—a mere handful of persons who had joined their forces together, seeking fortune by showing off, for the public's edification and amusement, their various feats of dexterity and strength. They heralded themselves in gorgeous large-typed placards as "The World-wide and Renowned Troupe of Prestidigitateurs, Gymnasts, and Strong Men from Mexico," and very clever and very strong they were. They had travelled nearly all over the globe with more or less varying degrees of financial success, and, after experiencing vicissitudes in Holland, had crossed over into Belgium, and were there reaping a fair harvest, which, in a great measure, made up for their previous losses among the unappreciative Dutchmen, whose country they had just so unregretfully passed through.

They were as curious and as mixed a set, these performers, as anyone could expect to see, the head of the troupe being a man of nearly forty years of age, a powerful, hulking person, with a muscular development which struck his audience with respectful awe and envy, a swaggering, roystering fellow, who prided himself upon his closely-cropped

hair and immense physical strength. He styled himself, Senor Don Albado, and he it was who performed daily and nightly such feats as throwing the cannon balls, lifting heavy weights, and so on, and was the terror of all in his employ, excepting the big, bold, red-faced, brazen-looking woman, who passed as his wife, and who, in a gaudy, ill-fitting, dowdyish costume of tights, took, among other duties, charge of the "treasury," and was "billed" as the "Senorita Cazallava, the unparalleled gymnaste."

The others of the party were a niece of the "senorita," a gawky, long-limbed girl, who also wore tights, and assisted in the performance; two hungry-looking youths—apprentices—who had been stowaways in an American liner, and a little, decrepid, mis-shapen lump of mortality—a hunchback about thirty, with a villainous cast of countenance, and who was very clever at conjuring, and all sorts of card tricks.

Senor Don Albado was an intense bully, and led his troupe some rare dances occasionally, if anything displeased him, which was pretty often, or if he had been drinking, which was quite as frequent, and beat them and abused them shamefully—all excepting the fair senorita, who could use her tongue and fingers to a very considerable extent when Albado was inclined at any time to be more than usually violent. Altogether, this Delilah of his had the power of subduing him in a most wonderful manner, not by cutting his locks but by picking up the first handy piece of furniture she could get hold of and "going for," in a very energetic manner, her paramour. Brutelike, he, for this practical though unpleasant evidence of superiority on her part, re-

spected her accordingly. Beyond this, her knowledge of, and fluency in, "Billinsgate" was such as to always inspire even Albado with reverence towards her. Regularly each night performances were given, and in the afternoons Albado would hold "receptions," and give lessons in, or exhibit his powers of, boxing, and these were invariably attended by the better, or rather wealthier, classes interested in such matters, as many as fifty persons often making their appearance, and, in many instances, taking part in the arrangements, and when the "hat" was passed round after the performance, these visitors responded pretty freely.

By these means the troupe built up quite a reputation, and this unexpected success, coming so soon after the months of depression which had preceded it, had the tendency to increase Albado's bullying conduct and liking for drink, with the result that he, to use an expression of one of the youths, made "everything unpleasant for everybody." To such a pitch did he carry matters, that he began to insult and assault even the visitors to the show, as well as people, innocent passers-by in the street, who, owing to his unmistaken strength, generally fought as shy as possible of him.

One day, however, Albado, to his cost, went just a little to far, for happening to meet two or three young English tourists who were paying a visit to Brussels, he, without the slightest provocation whatsoever, swore at them and called them all sorts of foul names. Like sensible beings, however, the young men took no notice whatever of the blackguard's conduct, but passed on as if nothing at all had happened. This annoyed Albado, who was in a

particularly mischievous mood at the time, so pulling off his coat with a great show of bravado, and throwing it on the ground, he went up to one of the young fellows, and, with a loud curse, hit him a rather formidable blow on the cheek.

The man, however, even with this kept his temper, and, beyond blinking a little bit, did nothing but continue in the direction he was going. By this time a crowd had collected which somewhat impeded his progress, and Albado, taking advantage of it, and using a volley of oaths, made an ugly rush at the unoffending individual—who was tall and as lithe as a lance, but wore blue spectacles, and looked the most unlikely man possibly to retaliate—and aimed another blow at him. Much to the surprise of everybody, and more to the astonishment of Albado than anyone else, the young follow drew himself up, parried the blow, and gave his assailant a "right-hander" under the ear with such force that he knocked the ruffian off his feet into the gutter, to the intense amusement of the crowd, who were heartily pleased with the turn things were taking, Albado having become so well known as an obnoxious character.

The Senor managed to get on his feet and face his foe again. By this time the tall young man had divested himself of his coat and hat, and taken off his sun-glasses, rolled up his sleeves, and with a very cool but defiant and determined look waited for Albado to make another move, which that individual did but with exactly the same results as before, upon which the crowd fairly cheered in their excitement.

Again and again was Albado knocked down, nearly always with that particular, disgreeable and formid-

able "right-hander" under the ear, until at last, being so thoroughly pummelled and thrashed, he could not manage to toe the line again, upon which the young fellow, having hardly turned a hair, gave him a parting look, which had volumes in it, asked for his coat, hat, and spectacles, coolly put them on, took the arm of one of his companions, who seemed to take the whole affair quite as a matter of course, and quietly walked away.

The tall young man, the visitor, was a fourth year student at St. George's Hospital, captain of its cricket club, and stroke oar in the students' "eight."

Albado reached his tent a few hours later, much humbled in spirit and considerably punished in body, and for a few days he needed all the senorita's nursing and attention before he was fit for work again, and in a condition suitable for his reappearance in public. When he did venture again upon the "boards," he was greeted with jeers and hootings and sarcasms by his audience—a perceptibly diminished one—as his beating had got into all the papers, and was in the mouth of everybody, for the "troupe" had received very considerable patronage in one way and the other from the citizens of Brussels, and who, although having previously applauded the man, were just as ready now to "chaff" and annoy him, such being only one of the many penalties attached to fame and popularity.

The "flowing tide" was evidently from this time not with Albado, and he found himself and his performances becoming, now that his own physical powers had been set at nought by the vigorous action of the smart medical student, every day less appreciated, as the dwindling audiences only too readily

testified. In a few weeks matters became still more alarming, the sum of four shillings and ninepence only representing the actual "takings" on one of, which was generally supposed to be, their busiest evenings.

This sort of thing could not last long, so making a grand effort by advertising pretty freely a final mid-day reception as well as a farewell night fete, both of which were responded to so poorly that expenses were not paid, he closed the show and departed, with much cursing and with much ill-feeling, from the land of Blucher, and made his way direct to England, his destination being London, where he duly landed, taking up his abode in lodgings in the neighbourhood of Fitzroy Square, there resting upon his labours for a while, where his enforced leisure gave him every possible opportunity of strongly developing the intemperate habits he had recently contracted, and which, in turn, led him into every imaginable excess.

Albado was brought under my notice by the fact that Scotland Yard had received notification from the Belgian authorities of his probable landing in London; who, furnishing a fairly full description of him, demanded his extradition on the grounds that at the "reception," which he gave in the afternoon immediately preceding his departure, he had managed to abstract from the pockets of the clothes—which had been placed in a screened-off portion of the tent and used as a dressing-room, of several of the gentlemen who took part in the proceedings, their watches and chains, no doubt with the intention of re-imbursing himself for some of his disappointments; and suspicion had not been awakened until

he was, so to say, "over the hills and far away" towards this country—which, by some strange irony of fate, is made the rendezvous of all the continental blacklegs who can safely crowd into it.

There was no difficulty in getting at Albado, for I had already been apprised by one of my "informers," residing in the neighbourhood of Tottenham Court Road, of the appearance of a very powerful man, and who was invariably drunk, and very noisy when in that condition, who appeared to be able to speak very good English, likewise also to possess a fair knowledge of several other languages. He created rather a sensation in the vicinity of his lodgings by his strength, having been seen on one occasion to bodily lift up together from the ground, to the man's intense astonishment, an organ-grinder and his instrument, with the greatest possible ease, putting them down again and walking on as though nothing whatever had happened, thereby greatly interesting the bystanders.

So I, therefore, thought I would pay him a visit, and at all events have a preliminary talk with him. He was at home, as it happened, when I called at the house he was staying at, suffering from a violent headache, and, as the "senorita" remarked as she came into the sitting-room, very bad-tempered in consequence. Presently he made his appearance, and gruffly and surlily enquired, with, I thought, a considerable suspicion of a cockney twang in it, "What I wanted?"

"Well," I said, "I have heard so much of your enormous strength that, purely out of curiosity, I took the liberty of calling upon you that I might

have the pleasure of beholding you in the flesh, senor."

This appeared to mollify him. It is really astonishing what a little flattery will do occasionally, and he thereupon playfully seized me by the waist and proceeded to lift me off my feet to convince me that what I had heard was perfectly correct.

Several other feats of strength he gave me an illustration of, and after a little further chat, in which I took the opportunity to say that "I thought I could secure him an engagement, at all events for some little time," I came away, having arranged to talk the engagement idea over with him the next morning at a public-house near Covent Garden.

He turned up at the time appointed, and I, of course, was there to meet him—having taken the precaution to have half-a-dozen, "plain clothes," able-bodied policemen easily within reach, in case I might require to make use of their services.

"Good morning, senor," I remarked; and, producing my warrant, said, "This is a paper which gives all the particulars of the little engagement I have in view for you."

He looked rather pleased, and remarked, "Where is it?"

"In Brussels. I am a police officer, and this paper is a document asking for your extradition for the offence of stealing five watches from five persons," the names of which I read out to him.

He put on a very evil and threatening expression, and clutched his fingers, whereupon anticipating his designs by giving a signal, which brought my batch of men on to the scene at once. I then asked him

to accompany us to Bow Street, where he was duly locked up, bail being refused.

He was allowed to communicate with the "senorita," who employed a solicitor for his defence, and who quickly put matters straight for Albado by making a surprising statement, which I had to verify by investigation, but which was quite sufficient to secure him his unconditional and immediate release upon the results of my looking into matters being known; the statement was to the effect that Senor Don Albado was no other than a notorious Mile End pugilist, whose real name was Jem White, and who some dozen years or so set out "furrin" to seek his fortune in company with the "senorita," who turned out to be "Lizer" Green, a well-known character, originally residing in the unsavoury locality of Great Peter Street, Westminster.

As the extradition laws do not, of course, apply to a naturalised subject of the country he or she may be arrested in, nothing more could be done, and the last I heard of "the world-wide and renowned troupe of prestidigateurs, gymnasts, and strong men from Mexico" was a provincial tour had been arranged for it, and it was then doing pretty well in a small way at Knott-Mill "Fair," Manchester.

"ON THE HIGH SEAS."

THE ship "Salxa," in the year 1885, sailed from Trieste, the well-known port in Austria, bound for Dover.

She had on board a miscellaneous cargo, and was manned by a mixed crew, under the command of a part owner of the vessel, a drunken, dissolute, reckless individual, whose sole study and consideration appeared to be the almost constant emptying and replenishing of a pannikin of spirits, which was always within his convenient reach.

Just before the vessel left the port, a bright, fresh, healthy-looking young Austrian, travel-worn and dusty, hurried up to the wharf, and pleaded hard with the captain to be given a passage to England in return for such duties he could perform, and which he would endeavour to carry out to the best of his ability.

The request, though met with a surly, sulky growl, was readily granted, particularly as the youth seemed a fairly good sort, that the ship was considerably undermanned, and the terms such that even the grasping, hard-hearted captain could scarce complain of; therefore, the young man stepped on board delighted to be able to escape from the uncongenial work he had left behind, for the truth was that he had run away from his master (to

whom he was apprenticed), and the occupation he disliked, and was anxious to come to England, which he had heard so much of, and try his fortunes there.

For some reason or other not apparent to anyone but the man himself, the captain took a great dislike to the lad almost before the vessel had left the port, commencing to shower down upon him abuse of every possible description.

To the youth's credit, however, he kept his temper, having noticed that the captain was apparently under the influence of liquor, and not quite responsible for his actions, and he performed his newly-found, unaccustomed and arduous duties in a manner that called forth the admiration of everybody on board, of course excepting the commander, who, instead of being mollified by the young man's endeavours and pleased at his untiring industry, seemed rather to develop his discontent, and take every opportunity of showing his dislike.

One day, when well out at sea, in a heavy swell and with a stiff wind blowing, he caught sight of the lad as he was walking along the deck seizing hold of the pieces of rope attached to the bulwarks for the purpose of steadying himself as he went along. Considering this to be a very unseamanlike method of proceeding, the captain called out with an oath to the youth to "let go his hold, and walk along properly, and not show his land-lubberly tricks there." Obedient to the command the youth did do so, with the result that, by a sudden and unexpected lurch of the vessel, he was pitched most unceremoniously on to some iron chains lying close by, and with such force that his head was severely cut and he himself ren-

dered insensible—the blood running profusely out the open wound into his hair and down his face on to the deck.

The callous captain refused to allow any of the men who had witnessed the affair to pick the lad up, and with an oath, remarked, "Leave him alone; he'll come to soon enough, I'll warrant." Finding, contrary to his expectation, that he did not come to, the brute rushed angrily forward, and, with a thick-knotted piece of rope, beat the insensible lad about the body in a most shameful manner, cursing and swearing the whole time, finally seizing him by the collar, dragging him "for'ard" and cruelly throwing him down the "companion way" of the fore cabin, where he tumbled helplessly and bleeding into the midst of the astonished group of men off duty, who were sitting around the lockers smoking and conversing.

This unwarrantable action almost caused a mutiny, for several of the men rushed up on deck, and, in a very angry manner, threatened the captain with what they would do if he did not take care and be more reasonable.

The only satisfaction, however, which they received, was a shot from the infuriated beast's revolver, which hit one of the men in the shoulder, just grazing the flesh; therefore, being themselves perfectly unarmed, and considering that, under the circumstances, discretion was the better part of valour, particularly in dealing with a man of that kind, who seemed to be hardly responsible for his own actions, they discreetly returned to their quarters, and held a consultation as to the best mode of procedure under the circumstances.

In the meantime, the lad had been "brought to," some rum given to him, and his head bound up, and put into a berth. The captain, swaggering and shouting on the deck, fired off the remaining shots from his revolver, went to his cabin, and was soon fast asleep.

The men decided that they would not take any action in the matter until the morning, as by that time the captain would have probably slept off some of the effects of his debauch, and prove himself to be a little more amenable to reason; if not, they had thoroughly made up their minds to use the requisite force necessary to place him under proper control should it be required.

The next morning, at about nine o'clock, a great noise and scuffling was heard going on in the captain's cabin, and a number of the crew rushed forward, armed with marlinespikes, expecting to find something of the kind which happened on the previous night again going on. It appears that the injured lad went as usual to straighten up the cabin, this being one of the duties he had to perform, when the captain, suddenly awaking, caught sight of the handkerchief tied round the youth's head, and evidently having forgotten all about the affair of the evening before, although in no way personally ameliorated in his feelings towards the lad, had suddenly got up, and roughly seizing the handkerchief, tore it from his head, administering at the same time a number of cowardly kicks which sent the youth reeling across to the other side.

Well, human nature must be really more than what it is to be able to stand this sort of treatment long without resisting it in some way or other, and the

now thoroughly infuriated lad did resent it, but in such a fashion as hardly to have been expected from him. Thoroughly roused at last by the captain's brutal conduct, he grasped that semi-drunken brute by the throat, forced him back on to the bed, and, in a moment of frenzied anger and excitement, plunged his knife right up to the hilt in the man's abdomen, and this just as the crew, attracted by the noise, reached the doorway, unfortunately too late to prevent the crime, which after all was one of as near to justifiable homicide as anything possibly could be, being committed; and only in time to witness the captain's last gasp, and the lad's look of perfect horror when he was himself again, and who, realising for the first time the awful deed which he had done, burst into tears very much overcome, having to be led away to his berth.

We may be perfectly sure that the deed caused no little astonishment and anxiety on board. The second mate was voted to the command, and an inquiry was held before the whole of the assembled crew, evidence and a description of the body taken, and the lad was informed that, although he would not be placed in confinement, he must, nevertheless, consider himself under arrest, and be prepared to be duly handed over to the authorities in Dover, in whose charge they regretted they would be compelled to leave him; for it must be confessed that the youth's engaging manners and frankness had made him the most popular person on board, excepting perhaps the mate who had recently been elected to the general charge of affairs.

In less than sixty hours from this time the white cliffs of Dover hove in sight and the quay was

reached. The first thing was to communicate with the police, who boarded the vessel for the purpose of arresting the poor lad who had placed himself in such an unfortunate position, when, to the surprise of the police officials, and to the apparent astonishment of everybody else, he was not to be found. A thorough search was made, but nothing revealed itself but the fact that the youngster had been one too many for them, and had escaped. I say surprise and astonishment. That the police were surprised I have not the slightest doubt whatsoever; but that astonishment (real genuine astonishment) was experienced by the crew I have my own opinion, which opinion, I take it, I am free to maintain. It was thought by some, who, of course, held different opinions to myself, and expressed them, that the lad had jumped overboard and committed suicide rather than face the disagreeable consequences of the legal tribunal. Strange to say, or perhaps not very strange after all, this was a suspicion which the sailors all seemed very anxious to propitiate. Others thought that the lad had escaped into the town and hid himself there, and a thorough look through the whole place was resorted to in consequence, rewards offered, and all the rest of it, but all to no avail. The lad had got clean away somehow, and where he had got to for the time being no one seemed to know.

The captain's body was duly landed, and there was not much of anything approaching expressions or looks of regret on the part of the crew, when the ghastly burden was wheeled off to the mortuary, and no one in particular seemed to trouble themselves much about being present at the funeral.

A few days after the captain was interred—if

being put into a cheap matchwood box, and tumbled into a hastily dug hole, can be called interment—a rather sharp young member of the Dover police learned that the youth had proceded to London the day the ship arrived. Thereupon "Scotland Yard" was made acquainted with the circumstance, and requested to lend its assistance in the affair.

I was told off to investigate the matter, and take up what clues I could find, and try to discover the whereabouts of the escaped one.

The first thing I did, of course, was to pay a visit to Dover and interview the police authorities there, examine the ship and question the crew. The police had very little to tell me, the crew had less; in fact, never did I in all my experience ever meet with such a "know-nothing" set of men as these latter; they all had such faulty memories and such hazy ideas that I fairly groaned in despair and aggravation. There were no less than eighteen "hands" on board, and every one of them, from the captain down to the cook's boy, had, by some extraordinary circumstance or other, each of them a totally different idea of the missing youth.

One said he was short, another declared he was tall, but was not certain as he had not had much to do with him; a third remarked that he was thin, whilst a fourth most solemnly assured me that he was inclined to be stout, and so on, which variety of descriptions I carefully noted down in my book, with the hope of being perhaps, after all, able to make something of them. The result was that the "information" I got was simply one huge incomprehensible mass of unintelligible contradictions. All that I could learn and depend upon was that the

youth was an Austrian, and I only obtained this information on the perusal of the depositions which he had signed, giving his full name and address, which I had verified by application by "wire" to the Austrian authorities. At the conclusion of the enquiry instituted by the crew immediately after the captain's death, I never had a more unsatisfactory two hours, and never learned less in the time. To use a sporting phrase, I drew a "blank," and a very unsatisfactory blank, too, for it was very evident to me that the crew were thoroughly determined to a man to give me as little assistance in my investigations as they possibly could, and I learned to appreciate this feeling when just as I was about to go ashore, having one of my feet on the gangway for that purpose, I was attracted by hearing a suppressed laugh immediately behind me. Quickly turning I overheard one of the sailors saying to another standing close by, in French, little thinking I understood the language, "He didn't get much out of us, did he?" The "he" meant me, of course; and this remark only confirmed the impression already made upon me in the early stage of the proceedings as to the youth's escape.

It would be a very long story—far longer, indeed, than you would care to read, if I filled in all the details describing how I took up what poor clues I had. Suffice it to say that within a fortnight after taking my work in hand I contrived to get on the youth's track. He had managed to get to Leighton Buzzard, on to Crewe and Preston, and from thence to the borders of Northumberland. In another week I discovered him one evening in a field working heartily with a farmer and his labourers, with whom

he had only been about three days, helping them to stack hay, and this in a little out-of-the-way village, three miles from the nearest railway station, and twenty-six miles from the main line, a place where I should imagine a detective had never before set foot.

He was, of course, very considerably surprised and "cut up" on hearing the purport of my visit, when I quietly, and unobserved by the others, made my presence known to him, telling him that he would have to accompany me back to London, and he begged very hard not to be taken, "he would never do the same again, and it was really only in self-defence that he unthinkingly committed the crime, and what would his poor father and mother say," etc. I felt heartily sorry for the lad, but, of course, I had my duty to do, much as I felt the hardship of the case when I learned the whole circumstances of the sad affair from him, and which were exactly as I have related them. It was too late to return southwards that night, the last main line train having left some time previously, so the only thing left for me to do was to take my charge to the village inn, engage a bed, and arrange to start off the next morning. We supped together, and the two of us occupied the same bedroom. Before retiring, I said to the lad very earnestly, thinking it might be of service to him: "You are a very young man to be charged with an offence of this kind, and the consequences may be serious to you indeed; they would, I am certain, be so in this country. Not, however, knowing the Austrian law, I cannot say how the affair might be viewed in yours. It was rather foolish of you to run away, but that is done with. All I want to say is, don't try to escape whilst you are with me, for I am

sure to find you again, and the attempt would only very greatly damage your prospects of ameliorated punishment."

The lad was really very penitent, and said "that I might thoroughly trust him in not endeavouring to get away, particularly as I had spoken so kindly to him, so different to the way in which the captain had treated him," &c. With this we went to bed.

The next day and the three following ones I was totally unable to get up owing to a very acute and unexpected attack of colic, which both the local medical practitioner and I really thought was going to end in peritonitis, and I don't know what in the world I should have done in that out-of-the-way place had it not been for my prisoner, who devoted himself entirely to me during that time, sat up with and poulticed me for two nights, administered food and medicine, and proved himself an exceptionally careful and patient nurse. He tended me in such a manner that the more I thought of it the more did I conclude how hard it appeared to have to repay him for all his kindness to me by landing him in gaol. It was the first time I had ever experienced anything of the kind at the hands of a prisoner, and I could not help feeling truly grateful for his disinterestedness.

The following Saturday, just one month from the day I set out, I reached town, handed my charge over to the custody of the officials at Bow Street, and in due course he was extradited in the usual way to Austria.

A local Austrian newspaper, now lying on the table before me, gives a very full account of the whole of the trial, which lasted four days, and

attracted, owing to the prisoner's youth and the special circumstances attending the tragedy, a great amount of sympathy and attention. Every one of the ship's crew turned up to give evidence, and if they could not say much towards enlightening the court as to the actual offence—for it will be remembered that they were just too late to witness the commission of it—their expressed admiration for the boy, and their testimony as to the deceased captain's notorious character, and his brutality on more than one occasion, was everything that could be desired from a defendant's point of view, and quite made up for any little deficiency in that respect. I've heard a fairly good deal of what is generally termed "hard swearing" in my time. I have seen scientific, professional, and other witnesses contradict each other in the most approved manner, and have listened to statements in the witness-box, made by apparently respectable people, which caused everybody, except those making them, to positively blush at their transparency; but never in all my life have I heard or read such a thoroughly sustained phalanx of evidence in favour of the prisoner and against the captain as I note in the columns of the newspaper containing the account of it, and as set forth by the sailors, who were determined to do their duty by their messmate, the incriminated youth, or perjure themselves in the attempt.

The captain, looking at the matter in a perfectly free and unbiassed manner, only received, perhaps, what he exactly deserved, for he was undoubtedly a scoundrel of a very black type, but on this evidence, as I read it, he was painted by the eighteen witnesses as mortal was never painted before, and the impres-

sion undoubtedly was conveyed to the court that if anything at all the treatment had in reality been very much too mild for him.

It was undoubtedly a serious charge, that of taking away another man's life, and the judge felt that, when he delivered himself of his opinion regarding the case. "It was serious, very serious," he remarked, "but the provocation was so great that he thought the ends of justice would be met by administering a sentence of three months' imprisonment without hard labour," which was just about a twelfth of what I had prepared the prisoner to expect.

* * * * *

The "Salxa" still sails regularly between Trieste and Dover, and my young "capture" is now third mate.

"How on earth do you imagine that I am going to find him?"

"I don't know, I am sure; but you had better have a try."

"Well, where shall I begin?"

"Oh hang it! anywhere. Turn round three times just in the same way as the children do in blind-man's-buff, and see who you can catch."

"It strikes me that I am hardly placed on the same satisfactory footing as the children in blind-man's-buff, for they do manage to have a pretty good preliminary look over those they endeavour to catch before permitting the handkerchief to be tied over their eyes; and here I am expected to find, with not the slightest possible clue supplied as to his movements, an individual whom I have never seen, and, as far as I can at present venture to predict, never likely to see."

"Well, my dear fellow, if Scotland Yard were kept informed of the exact locality where all the delinquents and wrong-doers are from time to time to be found there would be no work for you and your seven hundred fellow detectives to perform, would there?"

"No," replied I, a little savagely, "there would not, and no superintendent would be required to supervise them and ask them to undertake utter impossibilities."

"You don't want me to go and look for him, do you?" said my superior, viciously.

"No," I remarked, "I don't; but I really think that a vehement protest should be lodged with the authorities as to the very meagre particulars which are too often supplied by the Continental police."

"Yes, I quite see the general reasonableness of your remarks, and agree with their justness; but I am rather of a practical nature, Mr. Moser, and all this valuable time we are devoting to what at its best is only a profitless discussion, your 'man' is perhaps taking advantage of, to put a still greater distance between himself and his pursuers."

"The murder, you say, was committed about three months ago?"

"Exactly that time within a week."

"Hum! Goodness only knows where I am to begin and where I am likely to finish. But I can only try."

My superintendent and I had been holding this confab one morning after some papers had been placed in my hands relating to a murder which had been committed in Westphalia, Saxony.

The Westphalian police had searched very diligently in their own country for the murderer, but without success; but they had managed to secure sufficient evidence to warrant them in believing that the miscreant had sailed for England.

It appeared that the decomposing body of the victim had been found in the middle of a dense forest about fourteen days after the commission of the crime (according to the statement of the medical experts), and nine weeks after this the authorities communicated to Scotland Yard the intelligence

that the murderer had, to the best of their belief, come over to this country.

The victim—a gamekeeper—had been identified by his relatives; and as he was a good-hearted sort of fellow, well known in the district, two reasons were only forthcoming as to the probable cause of the murder. The first—and the less probable—that the murderer was a poacher, perhaps surprised in his work by the gamekeeper, with whom he apparently had struggled desperately, for there were a considerable number of footmarks and broken twigs about the spot where the body had been found; the second—and more likely—that robbery was at the bottom of it all, for the murdered man's watch (a silver one) and his cartridge belt were missing; yet to contradict this theory, his money was not removed.

Chiefly by tracing the footsteps, which owing to a long season of dry weather had not been obliterated, the local police had, by commendable patience and industry, managed to secure in their own minds pretty conclusive evidence that the guilty person, whoever he might be—as to who he really was they had not the faintest shade of an idea—had left Westphalia en route for England.

A full description of the body of the murdered man, the clothing and articles found upon him, also of the missing watch, which was a curious old-fashioned one, with the head of a dog—a dachshund—engraved upon it, and the cartridge belt was supplied. On these details—not a line indicating whom the prisoner might be—I was requested to set out among thirty-five millions of people dispersed over an area of many thousands of square miles, and from these, all over, or anywhere in the United Kingdom, to do

my best to find a man who was supposed to have shot a gamekeeper eleven weeks before in a forest at Westphalia.

My readers will thus, perhaps, appreciate the unsatisfactory nature of my task. To say that I set to work unprepossessed because of its almost utter hopelessness only mildly describes my feelings at the time.

Several applications to Westphalia for additional particulars or clues were fruitless; the authorities wrote stating most emphatically that they had supplied the "Yard" with every particle of information in their possession.

One slight consolation was left to me, however, and that was—and I thanked the fates heartily for it at the time—the fact that this glorious country of ours is an island, and the murderer—whoever he might be—could not have possibly walked over; therefore, if he came at all, he would arrive at some port or other in the United Kingdom. The Westphalians had mentioned the port from which they thought the murderer might have embarked, but this didn't help us at all, for nearly every vessel of importance from England sails to and from there. Had it been hams or potted meat enquired about, no doubt we should have obtained more satisfactory information, but being merely the escape of a murderer, the official intelligence was provokingly dull and apathetic on the matter; but perhaps I expected too much.

The first thing I saw to was the dispatch to every port of a circular note giving such particulars as were supplied to us, requesting the police to enquire at all the shipping offices and other likely places, and

ask the officials whether they could remember, at any time within the past three months, a provincial German arriving there.

I felt when I composed this circular that it was very indefinite, and expected a great deal too much out of nothing, but I was not quite prepared for the perfect torrent of sarcasm and chaff which was forwarded to the "Yard" in acknowledgment of it; it wrote (unofficially, of course) "that if the circular had been dated the first of April he could have understood its purport." Another remarked "that it was a great pity that the Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland Yard had nothing better to do than despatch conundrums all over the country." A third asked "whether the 'Yard' thought they put all the provincial Germans arriving at their port into cages for a few months, until they were claimed by someone;" whilst a fourth, a peppery, middle-aged Major in the north, "wondered what the devil we meant by our damned nonsense," and a lot more to the same effect, the other details of this gentleman's letter being, as the newspaper reporter remarked, "quite unfit for publication." The remainder either just formally acknowledged its receipt or ignored it altogether, with the exception of one who, to my intense surprise, just as I was beginning to think that I could not possibly get any further in the matter, wrote quite three weeks after, supplying some details which stimulated us considerably, and warranted further action being taken.

Some few days after this Inspector Froest and I found ourselves at Hull, presumably on the track of the supposed murderer, and our first interview, acting—as the policemen put it—"upon information

we had received," was with a loquacious lodging-house keeper—a widow—who seemed to have an idea that the "strange foreign gentleman," who had recently been staying with her would probably turn out to be the individual we were searching for, as he was so strange in his manner and possessed a watch of a peculiar kind. After considerable trouble we tracked this man, who was employed on the dock extension works, and instead of being the murderer we expected, turned out to be a great big, wild, six-feet-six Irishman, fresh from, and redolent of, the turf of Ballyshannon, and who, when we approached and spoke to him, looked at us suspiciously, raised his spade, and threatened "that, by jabers," he would jist "do" for us, "from his sowl he would," if we came any nearer. At this we couldn't help laughing, in which the Irishman himself, when he discovered our mistake, heartily joined also, and offered us such a "chew" out of a large round, engraved, Dutch-metal box, holding at least five ounces of "baccy," fastened to his belt by a thick brass chain. This was what the woman thought was a watch, and this the man she imagined a "foreigner"—confound her!"

After trying almost every place and locality we at last decided to pay a visit to all the pawnbrokers in the town, a list of which we obtained from the local police-station, to see if we could trace anything of either the cartridge belt or the watch. At the fifth shop, situate in Sculcoates, we called at, a watch, which had been pawned by a man giving the name of Thompson only a month before—the assistant could not remember much of the appearance of the pawner, upon whose security he had advanced fifteen shillings—was handed to us answering very closely

to the one we required, and upon opening it I discovered the number to correspond exactly with that given in the "depositions;" we seized it, feeling highly elated at the pleasant turn things were taking, and prosecuted our enquiries for the belt, but this without success.

We then began to make enquiries respecting "Thompson," by going over all our "ground" and run of lodging-house keepers (taking, however, greater care this time to guard against loquacious and misleading, muddling landladies) again, with the result that we received quite sufficient evidence to warrant our resolving to visit Newcastle, which we did the next day.

We gathered, during our short stay in Hull, that "Thompson" had secured temporary employment there as a dock labourer (that he could not have much money with him was confirmed by his having pawned the watch); therefore, it was not to be regarded as improbable that he would perhaps seek some work of a like kind at Newcastle, and when we arrived there we made a search lasting over two days among the hundreds of men employed at the docks, but were not rewarded with any success for our efforts. We retraced our steps, and spent two other days to make thoroughly sure that nothing had escaped us, but still remained unsuccessful.

Then we visited all the most likely lodging houses in the same manner as we had done at the Yorkshire chief port; and very tedious work this proved to be in this peculiar jagged up-and-down-hill town. No trace could be found of "Thompson" or of a German or a foreigner, these being the only clues beyond that of the watch that we could work upon.

A week of this sort of unsatisfactory and trying exeprience damped our spirits somewhat, and we began to invoke anything but blessings upon the departed shades of the murdered gamekeeper, wishing that he and all his Westphalian brethren could only have a try at the arduous work themselves, just to see how they would like it, when I made a suggestion that we should have a look round the collieries and see if our "man" was likely to be there. Half disgusted and very ill-tempered, we set off and made inquiries at quite a dozen "pits" before we got anything to repay us for our trouble. "There was," said a grimy "banksman," a typical Northumbrian, passing his rolled-up sleeve across his perspiring face, "a mon deawn 'ere abeawt a week ago, a 'furriner,' but 'e didn't seeum to like th' job, so got th' sack; and I believe 'e's at th' railway place yon," pointing to an engine-shed about half a mile away. We thanked him, and I gave him a shilling and our address, telling him that if he could find out or hear anything more of the "furriner" it would be quite worth his while to communicate the fact to us, and with that we walked over to the engine-house, and had a look round the place entirely upon our own account, in spite of the notice that "trespassers would be prosecuted" when presently an official, with a red band round his cap, came running up to us, and remarked—

"Well, what do you want here?"

"Oh," I said, "we are having a look round for a friend of ours, a foreigner, whom we are informed is engaged in the 'shed' somewhere."

"But we have no less than a dozen foreigners engaged here."

"Yes; but we want the one who has only very recently been engaged.

"Well, come to my office and I will look through the list. I am timekeeper and watchman here, so I have all their names and the dates they were 'taken on,' but look sharp, it's just dinner time and I have to check all the men coming out."

So we proceeded, crawling underneath some "trucks" to follow him to the office, and were just in time to watch the first man go through the turnstile and take his "tally" or number with him, which each one did from a board fastened against the wall, replacing it on a hook when he returned,

"Would you mind making some excuse or other to speak a word or two to each foreigner as he passes through?" said I.

"Certainly."

And this he did, and to the third foreigner, who was the recent employe, he said—

"How's your hand this morning, 'Thompson'?"

"Much good," replied that individual, in very bad English, showing a dirty rag bound round his thumb, and smiling.

"Did you get that injury whilst shooting the gamekeeper in the forest of Kleningberg?" said I, enquiringly, in German, as I placed myself in front of him, whilst Froest unobservedly went to his rear.

The colour faded from his face for a few seconds and he gasped, but he soon regained his self-possession, and very indignantly asked—

"What do you mean?"

"Simply this," said I, producing the watch and exhibiting it.

This was too much for him; he buried his face in

his hands and groaned, and went on in an alarming manner. When he had settled himself a little, I beckoned him into the timekeeper's little room. We searched him carefully, and found on him a pocket-book in which was an entry to the effect that he left Kleningberg the day after the "accident," as he had carefully written it, and in the lining of the thick coat he wore was a small bullet about the size of a pea, which had worked its way there unknown to him, and which corresponded to the two found in the dead man's body.

The cartridge belt was never found, although the prisoner admitted taking it when taxed with its whereabouts. I believe myself that he threw it overboard whilst crossing to England. Strange to say, he had landed almost right under our very noses in London, and had he only possessed the good sense to stay in the metropolis I don't think he would have been dicovered.

The pedigree of our prisoner proved upon investigation to be of more than usual interest, for it was discovered that he was the illegitimate son of a well-known German of high family, a good-for-nothing fellow who had committed many more or less grievous offences against the laws of his country.

One of his crimes had been, some fifteen years before, to forge signatures to documents, such as mortgage deeds, &c., and so obtain advances of money, sometimes to a very considerable amount; in fact, he had been guilty of this sort of thing a long time before concerning property belonging to none other than the murdered gamekeper, and yet had managed somehow, in spite of the vigilance of

the authorities, to make good his escape from arrest and punishment.

Further than this, he had sacrilegiously entered a church in a village not far from the forest in which the murder was committed, and stolen a considerable quantity of the communion plate, and successfully negotiated it; and in the year 1881 he distinguished himself—when in England before at that period, deeming it advisable to seek a temporary retreat here—by committing a series of very successful and undetected burglaries in the neighbourhood of Brighton, terrorising the inhabitants and mystifying the police who made a number of arrests of entirely the wrong persons, of course.

To these crimes might be added many others which he had participated in, including the garroting of a banker's clerk, and no less than three acts of incendiarism—fortunately in each instance frustrated, &c., making up about as "pretty" a list of offences as even the most hardened of criminals could possibly wish for, and Froest and I felt not a little pride of our success in overreaching this villainous vagabond, who richly deserved all he got.

When we got "Thompson" to Bow Street, it was found advisable, for strong sanitary reasons, to give him a bath, as, judging from his appearance and the odoriferous evidence afforded to us, it was quite certain that he could not have enjoyed the luxury of a thorough wash for, at the least, some months past. Upon being ordered to strip himself, the inspector in charge, holding his nose firmly between his fingers, suggested that he should have a preliminary wash down before being allowed to partake of the bath; but so filthy was this unsavoury, insanitary scamp's

condition that no one cared to venture within arm's reach of him to carry out the "superior's" instructions, therefore a bucketful of weak solution of carbolic acid was made, and this, as a first instalment towards the prisoner's bodily cleansing, was swished over him as he stood naked in the open yard; a few buckets of water followed suit, and then one of the younger policemen, more enterprising than any of the others, stepped forward, took off his tunic, rolled up his sleeves, procured the station mop and a liberal supply of water, and with a hearty good will, "went for" Thompson, and eventually succeeded in taking off, as he said, the "top layer" of months of accumulated matter. We were all, except the prisoner, much amused at the novel proceeding, and after the "wash" was completed, and when we had opened the doors wide to permit the fresh air to do its share of work in repelling the almost pre-adamite smell which pervaded the whole establishment, and satirically congatulated the extemporised bath-man upon his forethought and energy, which he duly and perspiringly acknowledged.

Thompson was extradited in the usual way, and, to the best of my belief, sentence of death was passed upon him and carried out.

My superior, of course, opened his eyes very widely when he was made acquainted with the satisfactory result of matters, but nevertheless heartily congratulated us upon our success, and neither Froest nor I regretted the termination of our long and tedious labours, which for some considerable time afterwards formed a prolific theme of conversation among the members of the force.

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